

Acting President's Report – CAAT-A Local 653 OPSEU Local 653 GMM; May 13, 2022

Last year saw the retirement of our long-time Local 653 President, Lad Shaba. We were very grateful that Tyy Dearden stepped up to take on the President's role at a time when our Local Executive was shrinking in numbers. Unfortunately, Tyy subsequently had to take a leave of absence, and in the spring, I took over as acting president. I would like to thank Tyy for stepping up to the role, and I would also like to thank our 1st and 2nd Vice-Presidents, Warren Schaffer and Clint Sheehan, for assisting with many of the duties of the President during Tyy's absence.

The past two years have been incredibly challenging for faculty. We have been thanked repeatedly by management for going "above and beyond", during this time. Unfortunately, those sentiments seem to disappear when it comes time to recognizing the time requirements of going "above and beyond". And now, it seems that what was once considered "above and beyond" has become "the new normal". The result is that we have many faculty on the brink due to overwork and stress.

The College likes to talk about quality, but it often fails to recognize that there is direct correlation between the working conditions of faculty and the quality of the courses they deliver. In that respect, the Collective Agreement is one of the greatest contributors to overall program quality. Just think about the difference between teaching four courses in a semester versus seven, or having 100 students versus 500. I think it is obvious which situation will lead to better course quality.

The workload limits in Article 11 of the collective agreement are the only reason you are not routinely assigned such excessive workloads. These are the same limits that the colleges consistently try to erode either by not properly attributing work on the SWF, or by bargaining to weaken the articles in the collective agreement.

Please continue to engage with your Local stewards and union officers. Let us know when you feel your work is not being properly recognized, or if you feel your manager is not following the collective agreement.

Thank you to all faculty for the work you do for our students and quality education in Ontario.

In solidarity,

Neal McNair
Acting President
OPSEU CAAT-A Local 653