

# United Steelworkers



## THE UNITED STEELWORKERS IS EVERYBODY'S UNION

With over 7,000 members employed as staff in universities in Ontario, the United Steelworkers has a strong record of representation in post-secondary education. People choose the Steelworkers for strong, democratic representation on the job. Choosing the Steelworkers means joining 280,000 other members in the most diverse union in Canada.

### The Most Democratic Union

Unique among unions in Canada, the Steelworkers' International Constitution ensures that all members have a vote, not only for their local officers every three years, but also in the election every four years of district, national and international officers. Each member votes in a secret ballot referendum. Most other unions elect their top officers by a vote of delegates at a convention.

Democracy in the Steelworkers means officers at every level are responsible to the membership. Democracy in the Steelworkers means everyone has a voice and a vote because it's the members who run the union.

We look forward to meeting Queen's University staff.

### IN SOLIDARITY,

*Allison Dubarry (University of Toronto), Margaret Carter (University of Guelph),  
John Ankenman (Victoria University), David Johnson (University of St. Michael's College)*

**WE ARE 7,000 UNIVERSITY STAFF STRONG. JOIN US.**

University of Toronto   University of Guelph   Victoria University   University of St. Michael's College



# WHY STEEL?



## member focused education

### Education brought *Back to the Locals*

Membership education is a priority for the Steelworkers. Each year, thousands of members attend union courses. These courses seek to educate, empower and encourage the participation of the membership in the work of their locals. Our pioneering Women of Steel program has given voice to thousands of women and developed new leaders in our union.

The Steelworkers *Back to the Locals* Education Program:

- Brings education to members where they work and live
- Offers courses that are tailored to the needs of the members
- Includes courses on Collective Bargaining, Women of Steel Leadership training, Human Rights, Health & Safety, Grievance & Arbitration and many others.

### How your dues are spent

## your dues

Dues are 1.4% of pay, plus 2 cents per hour worked. New members pay no dues until after they have democratically ratified a first contract that meets their needs. And no dues are paid by members who are away from work due to layoff, injury, sickness, or leaves of absence.

How your dues are spent:

- 44%: Local Union
- 44%: Union
- 7%: Strike and Defence fund (Current balance: \$150Million+)
- 3%: Organizing
- 1%: Political Action
- 1%: Canadian National Education Fund
- 2 cents per hour worked: Organizing Fund



Solid preparation, analysis, on the ground communication networks and expertise have resulted in significant gains for the membership.

## solid gains

### Collective bargaining

We are proud to say that in 2005 the Steelworkers negotiated significant gains in its four university contracts without giving into the concessionary demands tabled by the employers. Steelworkers have set the trend at universities by making major gains at the bargaining table before faculty.

A strategic approach to bargaining leads to the best collective agreements for the largest number of employees. The solid preparation, analysis of university budgets and pension plans, building an on-the-ground communication



network and expertise at the table has resulted in the Steelworkers leading the way in securing significant gains for the membership.

Our years of experience in the university sector means that we understand the particular issues and concerns of all university workers, including grant-paid funding issues and the particular needs of sessional, casual and part-time staff.

## health & safety

### At the forefront of advocating for members

The Steelworkers have long been in the forefront of advocating for the health and safety of its members. To date we have:

- Lobbied for legislative changes to protect our health and safety
- Westray Bill
- Fought for the right to participate in workplace decisions
- Fought for better working conditions and defended the lives and well-being of our members
- Built successful campaigns around issues such as asbestos exposure, stress, repetitive strain injuries

Currently, Local 1998 (University of Toronto) is working with the Steelworkers National office to address indoor air quality problems, a major membership concern.





# experience resources

## Expertise and resources

The Steelworkers offer in-house expertise and resources in a number of critical areas:

- **Legal Services** - Do you need a lawyer for a work related problem? Steelworker staff lawyers make sure that local unions and members get the best legal representation possible, and ensure fair treatment in the workplace.
- **Education** - Every year, thousands of Steelworkers are trained by their union to provide effective advocacy in areas such as collective bargaining, health and safety, workers' compensation and grievance/arbitration.

- **Research** - Experts in economics and public policy provide the facts and figures needed by union representatives and local unions so they can bargain the best possible collective agreements, solve health and safety problems, and influence governments on vital issues.
- **Health & Safety** - Steelworker staff work with local unions to educate members; representing them in workers' compensation matters, and the fight for better health and safety conditions in workplaces across the country.



## Key principles for the Steelworkers

Autonomy and Democracy are key principles for the Steelworkers, recognizing that it is the members who run the union. The Steelworkers is the only union that elects all of its union officials on the basis of one member, one vote.

The members elect the local union executive and the bargaining committee. Members determine the priorities for the local and for bargaining.

Members have greater control of resources as more of the dues remain with the local. Democracy in the Steelworkers means officers at every level are responsible to the membership.

**THE STEELWORKERS. EVERYBODY'S UNION. EVERYWHERE.**

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