



UVAE NEWSLETTER

MEET YOUR REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENTS (RVPs)

WESTERN – Gurinder Dev



I'm Gurinder Dev, recently elected Regional Vice President (RVP) for the Western Region. Prior to this I was a case management practice consultant (CMPC) working out of the Calgary office and the President for UVAE Local 30032 UVAE. My family immigrated to Canada in the early 70s and both of my parents took non-unionised factory jobs with terrible working conditions to make ends meet. My mom was a sewing machine operator and eventually developed severe carpal tunnel in both wrists, from which she has never recovered. My dad went deaf in his left ear from improper/no safety equipment in the factory job he held for over 30 years. We are in the western region and strive to make your voices heard. I promise to continue to work hard on your behalf and remind you that we are always stronger together.

ONTARIO – Zarina Khan



Serving as Regional Vice President (RVP) for the Ontario Region since 2014, I am very humbled and honored to be re-elected to this position once again. My home is with the Bureau of Pensions Advocates as an Advocacy officer. Prior to being elected as RVP I was very involved with my Local 70012 and served as President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. Canada has been my home since 1971, when I migrated here with my husband. My first encounter with bias and discrimination led me on to the path I am now advocating for my members and ensuring that they are treated equitably and fairly. Fighting for their rights is a passion for me and I try to do my best always and will continue to do so.

I am a Joint Learning Program Facilitator as well and enjoy this aspect of my union involvement very much.



CHARLOTTETOWN – Jody LaPierre



Jody LaPierre, a dedicated advocate for workers' rights and a seasoned union leader, resides in the picturesque city of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. With a career spanning several decades, Jody has left an indelible mark on the labor movement, tirelessly working to ensure the well-being and fair treatment of employees. Jody's journey in the labor sector commenced at the Veterans Affairs Canada Headquarters (VAC HO), where they dedicated an impressive 28 years of service. Over the years, Jody became deeply ingrained in the fabric of the Union of Veterans' Affairs Employees (UVAE), contributing significantly to its growth and success. For the past 25 years, Jody has been an integral part of UVAE, holding various key positions. Currently serving as the UVAE Regional Vice President for Charlottetown HO, Jody also manages the UVAE Health and Safety portfolio and plays a vital role on the Finance committee. Their commitment extends beyond the local level, with Jody co-chairing the VAC National Occupational Health and Safety Policy Committee and the VAC HO local Occupational Health and Safety Committee. Recognizing the importance of collaboration, Jody serves as an Executive Board Member on the PEI Federation of Labour, where they hold the crucial position of Treasurer. Additionally, Jody actively participates in the PSAC PEI Area Council and the PSAC PEI Human Rights Committee, showcasing an unwavering dedication to broader labor issues.

Jody's past union positions include being the Provincial Representative for PEI on the PSAC Atlantic Regional Council, Chair and Treasurer of the PSAC PEI Area Council, Treasurer of the PSAC PEI Human Rights, and serving as the Local President of UVAE 90001 H.O. To complement their extensive practical experience, Jody has invested time in continuous education, completing numerous Union Labour Educational courses from both the PSAC and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC).

Known for promoting a respectful and collaborative team culture, Jody LaPierre stands as a beacon of leadership and advocacy in the labor movement, bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience to every role they undertake. Their commitment to the well-being of workers and the principle of fairness continues to inspire those around them.



ATLANTIC - Edwin MacDonald



I walked my first picket line at the age of 4 when both of my parents – my mother a nurse and my father a machinist and shop steward for the DEVCO coal company – were on strike at the same time. Both strikes ended with the explosion of the #26 mine in February 1979. To this day I can remember feeling our entire house shake shortly after midnight, waking everyone up, and then the telephone starting to ring a few minutes later as both my parents were called into work. Unionism is in my blood. For many years I volunteered in community human rights issues. It was because of my human rights work my Local President recommended that I apply to attend a PSAC Equity Conference. Two weeks after I returned from the Conference I was elected as Local Vice-President. Since that very first election my Union career can best be described as surprising. Less than a year after being elected as Local Vice-President the Local President's longshot bid for higher office was successful and I was suddenly the new Local President. Two years later, at the first President's Conference in many years, there was a special election held to fill the recently vacated Equal Opportunities Coordinator position. I accepted the nomination and surprised myself again when I won. At the 2017 UVAE Convention the RVP-Atlantic at the time asked me to run for their Alternate, which I won by acclamation. But then another surprise came 4-months later when the RVP resigned and I suddenly became the RVP-Atlantic, a position I have held ever since. I have learned a lot about Unions over the years. The most important lesson is that the best Unions are the ones you never hear about; the ones who can negotiate away problems behind the scenes before they become public issues and grievances.

They are also the Unions that can get their members involved and interested, which scares the hell out of the Employer. This is the kind of Union I want for UVAE and our members. We have made huge strides in Atlantic in building our Union and engaging with our members, but there is still so much more to do. But it is work that I absolutely adore! I am honoured to do this as long as the members want me, which will hopefully be for many years to come.

QUÉBEC – Simon Renaud



Quite humbly, my union involvement started when I became a shop steward within the Union of Veterans' Affairs Employees in 2017, only a few months after I entered the federal public service. I had never taken part in union activities before, but I had a feeling that this type of involvement might be interesting. This feeling since became a certainty. I was elected Vice-President of my Local in 2018 and President in 2019. In my workplace, I am involved in the health and safety committee, in the mental health committee and as a union counsellor, among other roles.

The labour movement allows me to learn something every day about myself and the world of work. It mostly provides me with the great joy of being able to work every day to try and make a positive difference in the lives of my coworkers. I am committed to organizational development, and I am sure that the way to really become an employer of choice is by investing in existing human resources.

I am aware that there remains much work to be done and I sincerely strive, since my election as Regional Vice-President for the Québec Region in October 2023, to continue putting all my heart into working for my members. I am eager to meet you. In solidarity.

**2024
Upcoming
PSAC / UVAE
Events**

NEO Retreat
WENDAKE, QC
April 11th & 12th

**PSAC National
Triennial
Convention**
OTTAWA, ON
May 26th to 31st

**NEO Spring
meeting**
OTTAWA, ON
June 2nd to 6th

