

**REPORT  
OF THE  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT  
Shimen Fayad  
Spring 2021**

**Sisters and brothers,**

I submit my President's Report on behalf of and to the members of the Union of Health and Environment Workers and the National Council. We have officially reached the one year mark since the WHO declared a world pandemic. The last year has been extremely busy for me as your National President as it has been for all of you. Yet, this pace will continue because we are not out of the pandemic anytime soon!

Since my last report, I have been trying to focus our activities on more proactive measures as we were in reactive mode last year. I have continued to meet with the departments addressing issues of our members returning to work prior to the second wave and now entering a third wave in some regions. Issues around 699, PPE and equipping members from home have reduced but have not disappeared.

Since the last Council meeting, I have worked with the PSAC negotiators to negotiate various Memorandum of Understandings with two departments to ensure members rights.

**National Council plan forward**

In 2021, I started meeting with Locals at a "Coffee and Convo with the National President" and Benoit, the NVP was also in attendance. During these calls, I wanted to thank the locals for being the support to members and continuing providing service even though it may be virtual. I also wanted to hear their thoughts on how we at the National Office can provide more supports and through what medium. We will be challenged with recruiting volunteers, reaching out to members and performing our union activist activities that used to be in person. After we meet with the Locals, I will review the feedback, consult with Council and plan some activities for engaging members in a virtual environment. We have heard support for a survey to members as well as doing "member features" on the website to illustrate the diverse roles our members perform in the workplace. It was great to see everyone virtually and I look forward to the remaining meetings.

One of my on-going goals is to improve our overall communications to the membership. To that end we have made a conscious effort to create content for the UHEW website that is both current and relevant. We have updated the bios for all National Council members and they will be on the website soon and we have starting producing monthly Messages from the National President and the National Vice-President. In addition, we produced two special pieces that highlighted the

work of some of our women National Council members to celebrate International Women's Day in March and we will be doing more profiling of UHEW members throughout the year. We have also seen first-hand how the pandemic has increased anxiety and stress for our members and for those that were already struggling with mental health issues, this last year took a toll. Our locals need our support to be able to provide for the members. This is why I am organizing more training for RVPs on trauma, mental health and violence in the workplace. I have secured training for "trauma informed leadership" and will be advising the Council of this training as well as the other training I am proposing for building capacity. These training sessions should be offered to local executives and we will be working towards this goal in 2021.

### **Bargaining**

UHEW received over 300 bargaining demands from the PSAC call out to members. Benoit, Julie and I spent many hours reviewing and categorizing these demands. I then met with each RVP that had demands submitted from their region to review if the demands should be approved to submit. In total, 147 demands will be sent to the PSAC Bargaining conference to be held at the end of April. For the demands that were not moving forward, most were demands that are negotiated through a separate process such as health & dental benefits and National Joint Council allowances. I will be meeting with the UHEW conference delegates and we will identify which bargaining demands will be a priority for UHEW.

### **UHEW Financial position**

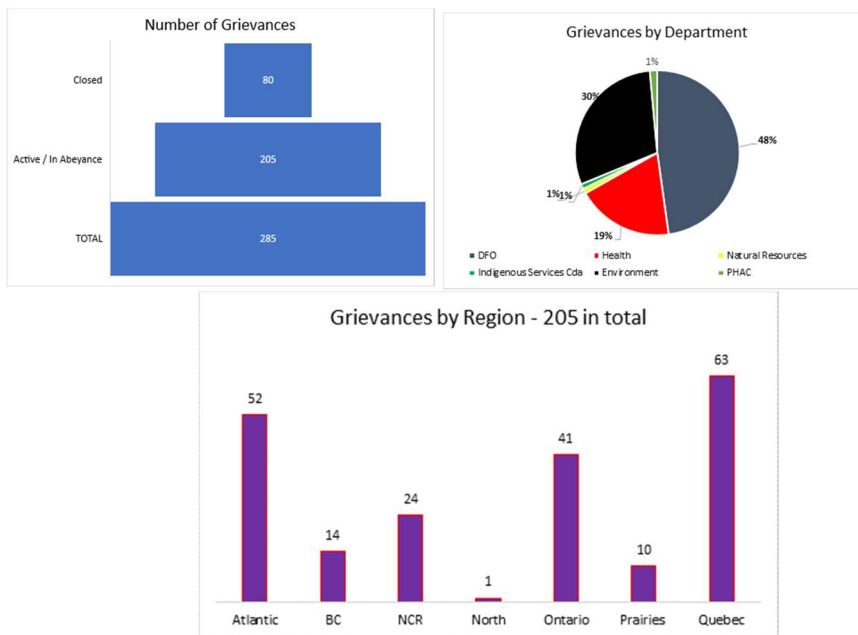
The Finance Committee will be presenting to National Council this Spring, a sensible budget to present to our governing body, the UHEW Triennial Convention. A preliminary three-year budget was drafted prior to the pandemic restrictions. The draft safeguarded members' dues and we were able to continue with the existing structure and dues rate. As a result of the suspension of timelines for Conventions, which was passed by the PSAC National Board of Directors, this three-year budget will now be adjusted for a two-year cycle. The Finance Committee will work diligently to create a draft resulting in assuring our members that their National Council is committed to their role as custodians of UHEW finances.

### **UHEW Convention**

The UHEW National Council passed a motion to have the 2<sup>nd</sup> UHEW Triennial Convention as a virtual event. Council was very concerned about the safety of all our members and therefore in light of the pandemic having no signs of slowing down and getting back to pre-COVID activities, Council decided to hold the pre-Convention Committee meetings and the Convention as virtual. I have secured services with the same organization that will be facilitating the PSAC Regional Conventions and we will have the ability to customize a virtual platform that will work for UHEW.

## Grievances

The UHEW Labour Relations Officers have been working remotely and continue to assist RVPs, Local and members through formal and informal processes. I have assigned the VP and an RVP to meet with an LRO to discuss options on a streamlined process on how to distribute the workload to present to Council. The distribution used to be regional however since the two newer LROs started, files have been assigned not dependent on regional allocation.



## Other activities

### -PSAC Pension Committee

As a NBoD member, I was appointed to the Pension Committee with the responsibility of overseeing the PSAC employee pension plan. I was provided training and participated in two meetings. Part of this role will require me to take various training modules throughout the year.

### -PSAC Education Committee

As a NBoD member, I was appointed to the Education Committee with the responsibility of reviewing the PSAC education priorities. At the last meeting, I advocated for immediate training for those locals that have newly elected executives. Our locals have waited too long for PSAC training and we have an opportunity to get more participation because of the virtual platform. PSAC is now piloting a virtual TUB training and it will be available to all regions. Another training being offered is short sessions on what is your union. More information can be found on the PSAC website.

-PSAC Environment Committee

As a NBoD member, I was appointed to the Environment Committee. The Committee reviewed and updated the mandate as well as identified priorities. I also advised the Committee that the UHEW is working with PSAC on a joint campaign on plastics. I will be meeting with the UHEW Environment Committee to provide an update on the campaign as well as assign two members of UHEW EC to assist the work with PSACPSAC Unallotted member Committee. As a member of this committee, we discuss how to allocate members working in departments with more than one component representing the members. To date I have worked on three separate Letter of Agreements with two other components in regards to jurisdiction.

-Participated in weekly Component President's conference calls. Purpose of calls are to discuss common issues amongst Components and issues we wish to raise at the NBoD.

-Participated in PSAC National Board of Directors calls. These calls provide important updates and -information for Component President's to share with their National Executives.

-Numerous calls with Regional Vice Presidents on specific member files and regional issues.

-Numerous calls with PSAC pay escalation lead in regards to member's pay files.

-Almost daily calls with National Vice President on UHEW planning, strategies, member files, National Office activities, departmental issues and national files.

-Calls with UHEW LROs on specific member files raised to my level for direction and follow up.