



QUFA VOICES

Your Queen's University Faculty Association Newsletter

VOICES IN THIS ISSUE: May 2023

PRESIDENT'S VOICE: Passing the Torch, by Jordan Morelli and Cella Olmstead ... 1-2

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VOICE: Summer Slowdown, by Leslie Jermyn ... 2-3

FYI: Continuing Adjunct Benefit Entitlements, by Leslie Jermyn ... 3-4

GRIEVANCE CORNER: Introducing Karen Sisson, by Karen Sisson ... 4-5

PRESIDENT'S VOICE

Passing the Torch

QUFA's outgoing and incoming Presidents reflect on the year past and gear up for the years ahead

By Jordan Morelli
President, QUFA

and Cella Olmstead
Incoming President, QUFA

As we prepare to pass the presidential torch on 1 July 2023, we wanted to take a moment to reflect on the past year's accomplishments, challenges, and changes.

The biggest accomplishment was also our biggest challenge: bargaining the 2022-2025 Collective Agreement. It bears repeating what a debt of gratitude we all owe the bargaining team and all those who supported preparations for job action. We were forced to bargain differently because of the wage restraint that initially circumscribed our mandate, and we learned a lot in the process. Fortunately, the restraint legislation was struck down at a critical point, so we were able to make significant gains in both monetary and non-monetary elements of the agreement. We are using this experience to set out a mandate and priorities for the upcoming year.

QUFA IMAGES

Summer Mode



file

It's summer, so the QUFA Office will be going into summer mode. Please see Leslie Jermyn's article "Summer Slowdown" on pp. 2-3 for complete information about how Members can reach QUFA during the summer.

Following bargaining, QUFA staff and volunteers have been busy ensuring compliance with new contract provisions and staffing new committees while also getting ready for some significant shifts in personnel.

We are happy to be welcoming some new and returning members of the Executive Committee:

- **Karen Rudie** (Electrical and Computer Engineering) is coming on as Vice President.

- **Rebecca Hall** (Global Development Studies) accepted an interim position and then was elected to a full term as Chair of the Political Action and Communications Committee.
- **Lynne Hanson** (Law) is returning to the Executive as Chair of Grievance Committee.

We are very grateful for the long, dedicated, and invaluable service of:

- **Constance Adamson** (Library) who has served in multiple

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Retroactive Compensation Schedule

Regular (non-stipend) salaries (including Continuing Adjunct salaries) are scheduled to be increased by the 2022 ATB of 3.5% for the May payroll. As well, retroactive salary payments and merit points will be applied to the May payroll. Letters outlining these calculations are expected to be delivered to each Member in June.

Term Adjunct retroactive increases to base stipends are targeted to be paid in July. These take longer because faculty officers have to review contracts manually to determine what portion of Term Adjunct pay is based on course stipends. Please see the new stipend tables in Article 42, here:

<https://www.queensu.ca/faculty-relationships/qufa/collective-agreements-lous-moas>

Please bring any concerns about retroactive pay to Faculty Relations (fro@queensu.ca) after you have reviewed your salary adjustment letter. Please also note that there is no tax exemption for lump-sum payments made as a result of the application of retroactive salary increases.

capacities including President, Joint Committee to Administer the Agreement (JCAA) Co-Chair, member of multiple bargaining teams, and most recently as Chair of the Grievance Committee.

- **Elizabeth Hanson** (English) who is stepping off the committee as Past President but who also served QUFA as Chief Negotiator on multiple rounds of negotiations (including during COVID-19) and JCAA Co-Chair.

QUFA is very pleased to welcome a new Grievance Officer, **Karen Sisson**, who is replacing **Peggy Smith**. Peggy has decided to retire from the daily hustle and bustle of the office, but will remain available over the summer to ensure a smooth transition. It has been a real pleasure to work with Peggy these past five years, and we will miss her sharp insights and easy laughter.

It is hard to believe that we have just over a year before we have to get serious about preparing the next round of bargaining. There is much to accomplish in that time, and we look forward to working with you to get it done.

The QUFA Executive will recess for July and August to catch our breath. We wish you a bright and peaceful summer term!

Jordan Morelli can be reached at morelli@queensu.ca.

Cella Olmstead can be reached at olmstead@queensu.ca.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S VOICE

Summer Slowdown

QUFA will close on Fridays over the summer after a busy bargaining year, but Members can still reach QUFA staff via e-mail

**By Leslie Jermyn
Executive Director, QUFA**

I hope everyone has had an opportunity to feel some sunshine on their faces and take a breath following the winter term! It has been a very stressful year for Members returning to a classroom—which is not quite the same as the classroom they left in March 2020—while keeping half an eye on a round of bargaining that seemed to be heading for job action. That endless and difficult round of bargaining left QUFA staff, leadership, and volunteers exhausted and needing a break. But post-bargaining developments, tasks, and events have not offered much of an opportunity to take one.

As we usually do in the summer, QUFA will close the office (both physical and virtual) on Fridays starting 30 June 2023 and ending 1 September 2023. QUFA staff will not be available to answer your queries on those days, but please send us an e-mail and we'll respond when we return. As well, there are vacations planned for the summer months and some new staff coming on board, all of which will slow our response time. Please be patient with us, and we'll do our best to address all inquiries.

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QUFA Voices is published by the Queen's University Faculty Association (QUFA), 9 St Lawrence Avenue, Kingston, Ontario, K7L 3N6, Canada (qufa@queensu.ca). It is distributed electronically to all QUFA Members via the QUFA-NEWSLETTER-L listserv. Past issues are archived on the QUFA Web site at <http://www.qufa.ca/publications/>.

QUFA Voices publishes QUFA-related news and information for QUFA Members and provides QUFA Members with a forum to express their QUFA-related ideas and opinions. We want to hear from you! Please send your QUFA-related story ideas, news items, opinion pieces, letters to the editor, photographs, and other submissions to the editor.

QUFA Voices is edited by Robert G. May. He can be reached at mayr@queensu.ca.

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Manulife Trouble?

We are hearing hints and whispers that Members are experiencing difficulty getting their Manulife claims processed. While you should always contact Queen's HR in the first instance to seek resolution of these problems, QUFA is interested to hear from you to determine whether there is a pattern of claim denial or underpayment that we could address systemically with Queen's.

If you have had difficulties and are able to share your story, please put "Manulife Trouble" in the subject line and explain the problem you had in an e-mail to qufaed@queensu.ca. We don't need deeply private information such as names of drugs or specific treatments, but if you could broadly explain what the claim was for (e.g., dental, prescription, extended medical equipment or services, etc.) and what problem you encountered, we would appreciate it.

All staff e-mail addresses are on the Contact page of the QUFA Web site (www.qufa.ca). E-mail is generally the best initial point of contact, as it can be forwarded to the appropriate person without loss of detail or accuracy. General inquiries should go to qufaed@queensu.ca for redistribution to appropriate advisors.

I want to ask you to take a moment to review all the announcements in this issue of *QUFA Voices*. There's a lot of important information in this issue, likely our last until fall. Have a great summer!

Leslie Jermyn can be reached at qufaed@queensu.ca.

FYI

Continuing Adjunct Benefit Entitlements

Continuing Adjunct Members may be eligible for extended medical and dental benefits from Manulife, and to pension benefits from the University Pension Plan

**By Leslie Jermyn
Executive Director, QUFA**

Currently, 124 QUFA Members are Continuing Adjuncts with appointments ranging from less than 20% of a full-time equivalent (FTE) position to 100% FTE. There has been much confusion around Continuing Adjunct entitlements to extended medical and dental benefits as provided by Manulife, and to pension benefits as provided by the University Pension Plan. Entitlement levels for these benefits are calculated differently and as follows:

Manulife Benefits (Dental, Medical, Insurance)

You must have an FTE of 40% or greater to qualify for the Manulife Benefits package. If you do qualify, your benefits are not prorated if your FTE is less than 100% but therefore the bar is high to qualify. This cutoff is set in the contract between Queen's and Manulife and cannot be separately negotiated. If your FTE is very close to 40%, and you regularly do additional teaching or service, it would be worthwhile to talk to your unit head about increasing your FTE to qualify for benefits.

Pension Enrolment

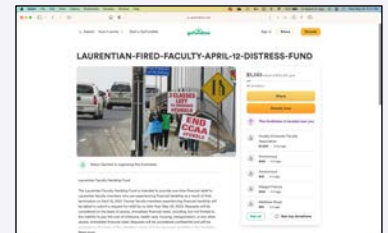
Entitlement to pension membership is based on different criteria that are set by the Pension Benefits Act (PBA). The PBA says that if you are part of a group of people who are pensioned in the plan (Continuing Adjuncts are potential members) and you earn more than 35% of the Yearly Maximum Pensionable Earnings

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Laurentian Faculty Hardship Fund

The Laurentian Faculty Hardship Fund is intended to provide one-time financial relief to Laurentian faculty members who are experiencing financial hardship as a result of their termination on 12 April 2021. Former faculty members experiencing financial hardship will be asked to submit a request for relief by no later than 23 May 2023. Requests will be considered on the basis of severe, immediate financial need, including but not limited to the inability to pay the cost of childcare, health care, housing, transportation, or any other severe, immediate financial need. Requests will be considered confidential and will be assessed on the basis of the members' needs and the resources available in the Hardship Fund.

To donate online, please access the GoFundMe page here:



<https://www.gofundme.com/f/laurentianfiredfacultyapril12distressfund>

QUFA Executive and Council authorized a donation of \$2,000 to the fund through CAUT, and many other faculty associations are doing the same.

Please note that the fund is not a Canadian registered charity and cannot issue receipts for donations for income tax purposes.

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Important Application Deadlines

Voluntary Phased Retirement Program

If you are considering entering the phased retirement program in 2024, your application is due 1 July 2023. More information and a link to the application form is on this page under the VPRP accordion tab:



<https://www.qufa.ca/member-services/pension-information/>

Adjunct Fund for Scholarly Research and Creative Work and Professional Development:

The next deadline to apply for this Fund is 5 June 2023. An e-mail was sent with more information on 1 May 2023, and you can also find information here:



<https://www.queensu.ca/faculty-relations/qufa/research-fund>

Please review the application requirements carefully, as incomplete or late applications are disqualified.

(YMPE) (the maximum salary pensioned by the Canada Pension Plan) for two consecutive years, then you are entitled to join the pension plan. In 2023, the CPP covered income up to \$66,600 (the YMPE), and 35% of that is \$23,310. The YMPE is adjusted upward each year and is easily searched on the Internet. The bottom line is that you may have a small FTE, lower than 40%, and still make enough salary over two years to qualify for pension-plan membership according to the PBA rules.

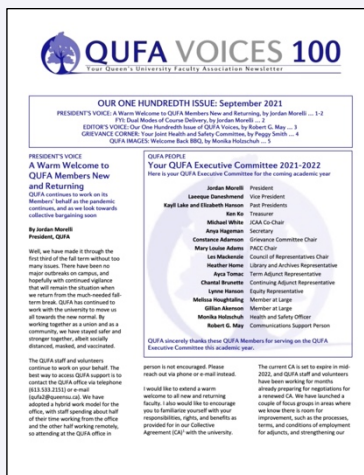
As it stands, Queen's does not apply these same rules to Term Adjuncts, whom they argue are not permanent employees. If you are a Continuing Adjunct or are applying to become one, please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you think there has been an error in assessing your pension and benefits eligibility.

Leslie Jermyn can be reached at qufaed@queensu.ca.

QUFA VOICES Voice Your Views!

If you have an opinion about anything you read in *QUFA Voices*, send us a letter to the editor!

mayr@queensu.ca



GRIEVANCE CORNER

Introducing Karen Sisson

QUFA welcomes Karen Sisson as QUFA's new Grievance Officer and in-house lawyer

**By Karen Sisson
Grievance Officer, QUFA**

Hello, QUFA Members! I am very pleased to introduce myself as QUFA's new Grievance Officer and in-house lawyer.

I am a proud 2020 Queen's Law graduate. In 2009, I obtained my undergraduate degree in Social Work, with a minor in Women's Studies, at Carleton University. Before that, I had been working as a social service worker in the city of Ottawa. Between 2009 and 2018, I worked as a family services worker in Kingston.

My decision to transition my career out of social work and into law was triggered by an interest in accessing the empowerment provided via a legal education. While my social work career supplied numerous opportunities to provide advice and advocacy, my capacity to tangibly influence decision makers was restricted. I saw legal education as my best option to advance my interest in meaningfully contributing to fair outcomes for community members.

Queen's Law School provided me with ample opportunities to develop my understanding of how legal systems operate in Canada and to practise substantive legal advocacy skills. I took advantage of opportunities to work at the Queen's Legal Clinics, including the Family Law Clinic in my first-year summer, the Prison Law Clinic in my second year, and the Advanced Prison Law Clinic in my third year. I was most interested in administrative, labour, and family law during my studies.

I was especially intrigued by the intersection of labour law and human rights law, and this keen interest led me to secure a fabulous opportunity to summer and article with a leading labour and human rights law firm. In those student roles, I received excellent mentorship and my first exposures to practising in the specific milieu of union-side labour law, which I found to be tremendously rewarding.

Following my call to the bar in 2021, I was provided an opportunity to work as an associate at a local law firm that specializes in child protection and family law litigation. While I enjoyed many aspects of practising in family and child protection litigation, I have concerns about the traditionally adversarial nature of the courtroom as it relates to achieving equitable and/or child-focused outcomes for most families. It was soon apparent that a traditional approach to family law litigation was not “filling my cup,” so to speak.

I heard about the opportunity to work as a Grievance Officer and in-house lawyer for QUFA from a former colleague after I was lamenting about missing union-side labour law. After learning a bit more about QUFA, I had no hesitation when considering whether to apply for the opportunity, and I am delighted to have been the successful applicant. QUFA’s formidable staff, Executive, and volunteers have been tremendously welcoming and supportive during my onboarding and training, and Members I have interacted with have been equally hospitable.

I wish to take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude for the warm welcome I have received. I also wish to thank QUFA’s prior Grievance Officer, Peggy Smith, for all her guidance and advice during my onboarding. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to know and work with Peggy, albeit briefly,

SOCIAL MEDIA

Access QUFA Online

QUFA Members can interact online with QUFA in many different ways!

QUFA’s online resources contain a wealth of information about your faculty association, including upcoming events, information about the collective agreement, news items of interest, and more. Follow us!

QUFA Web Site




www.qufa.ca

QUFA on Facebook




www.facebook.com/qufapage

QUFA on Twitter




www.twitter.com/qufatweet

QUFA on Instagram




www.instagram.com/qufagram/

and I wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement.

Overall, things seem to be off to a great start! I remain confident that my unique skill set will be a great match to the role, and I look forward to providing QUFA and its Members with diligent service and robust

advocacy in support of the organization’s collective interests.

Karen Sisson can be reached at ks233@queensu.ca.