

September 1, 2011

Sent on behalf of Sean McKenny

Good afternoon,

As you may be aware OPSEU college workers across Ontario walked off the job at 12:01am Thursday morning after an unwillingness by management to withdraw several demands for concessions and claw backs to its existing contract – and its reluctance to negotiate many of the union’s proposals.

In Ottawa college workers are represented by OPSEU Local 416 at Algonquin College.

Earlier today I spent time on the picket line and met with several workers including Jan Strickland, OPSEU 416 president. I also had a discussion with Algonquin College president Robert Gillett on the telephone.

The sisters and brothers of OPSEU 416 are very united and determined to hold the line until they get a reasonable and fair agreement. Unfortunately, this morning some clown apparently thinking a picket line is meant to speed your car through hit one of the picketers. The clown was charged by the Ottawa Police, who were close by. The brother from OPSEU who was hit by the car is a little shaken up but otherwise fine.

Labour Council is working very closely with the Local and has already initiated steps to try and ensure labour solidarity amongst other unions who have occasion to deliver goods or otherwise visit the college on a daily or weekly basis.

We are also tentatively planning a “Solidarity BBQ” for Tuesday (September 6th) which is to coincide with the opening of the new Algonquin Centre for Construction Excellence where several area MP’s, MPP’s, city councillors and others have been invited to attend that opening. There are currently two picket lines set up at the College. One directly at the main entrance on Woodroffe Avenue. The other off Navaho Drive close to College Square. The line is running 24 hours but will end tomorrow around 2:00pm for the long weekend – starting up again on Tuesday morning.

It has been tradition at Labour Council to have those unions who are on strike or lockout at the front of our Labour Day March on Labour Day. I have let OPSEU 416 know that it would be an honour for the broader Labour community to have them at the front of this years’ March.

If you have the opportunity to show your support on the picket line for those sisters and brothers – maybe on your way to or from work – maybe at lunch time if your workplace is not too far

away – it would be very much appreciated.

We will try and keep everyone up to date.

Thank you.

In solidarity,

Sean McKenny

President

Ottawa and District Labour Council