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THE AGORA

The Government Services Union Quarterly Newsletter

Shanny Doucet

**Profile of a
Committed Leader**

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My friends,

How quickly time flies. It seems like only yesterday you gave me the honour of being your president. I have been in this position for six months now and although things seem to be changing slowly, they are changing. A return to our "old" life is slowly taking place and we are finally able to gather in person, I look forward to meeting you.

I sense a shift in employers' willingness to work more with us to provide a better work environment and to recognize GSU as an ally rather than an enemy. We have a long way to go, but we are making progress, always with your best interests in mind.

New initiatives are being developed to give our activists the tools they need to do their union work with confidence. We are also rethinking our communication methods and to innovate in the sharing of information.

Great things are in store for GSU. And it is with commitment and motivation that I begin the next chapter of my mandate.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to salute one last time the exemplary work of our colleague Shanny Doucet. On behalf of GSU and myself, thank you Shanny for all your years of dedication to our organization. There will always be a place for you at GSU.

For you and with you.



The Government Services National Council

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Shanny Doucet

Profile of a Committed Leader

Shanny Doucet is a proud member of Local 60018 in Shediac and Regional Vice President for the New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island Region.

Shanny began her career with the federal government in 1998. First with Revenue Canada (1998-2002), then with the Canada Border Services Agency (2002-2005) and finally joining the Government of Canada Pension Centre at Public Services and Procurement Canada in 2005.

Twenty years of union and social involvement

While working for the Canada Border Services Agency, Shanny and her co-workers realized that their classification was not at the same level as a group of employees doing the same work in Winnipeg. Shanny and her co-workers decided to initiate a group grievance process for reclassification, during which Shanny volunteered to conduct a detailed comparison of the job descriptions of the two groups. That was 2002 and the beginning of a long union career for Shanny.

Shortly after joining the PSPC family, Shanny became a steward for Local 60018 in Shediac. For over 10 years, Shanny held key roles in her local, culminating in her presidency in November 2016.

She will remain as Local President until October 2017, when she will be elected at the GSU Triennial Convention as Regional Vice-President for the New Brunswick/Prince Edward Island Region. She will hold this role until her "retirement" from the union on March 31, 2022.

Giving so much of your time has its challenges. The sense of accomplishment is what has motivated Shanny to persevere throughout the years:

"Balancing work, the union, family and relationships has probably been the biggest challenge of my union career, but the solidarity and support among members has given me the energy and drive to keep going and do my part. Giving back to the next guy and the young workers of the future is definitely my greatest pride."

Thinking about the future, acting now

For years, unions have faced recruitment and engagement challenges. With the pandemic and the virtual world, it is imperative that we take a moment to reflect and rethink the way we do things:

"The biggest challenge is now. How are we going to reach out to our members in a predominantly virtual world? We need to be innovative in our ways of doing things. Be proactive leaders rather than reactive and in a hurry to act."

A final word

"The union family has given me a lot over the past few years. I have gained a lot of knowledge and have been able to share it with others. We need to innovate, be open to new ideas, but above all, remember that mutual support is very important if we want to continue to build our capacity and remain a strong and united union."

On March 31, Shanny passed the torch to Mike Leblanc to take over. She returns to the Shediac Pension Centre as a coach. The desire to help others is never far away.

Thank you Shanny!

Shanny's social and union involvement is not limited to GSU. Over the years, she has held positions with PSAC Atlantic and the New Brunswick Federation of Labour.

- ♦ 2007-2009: Director representing young workers, PSAC Atlantic
- ♦ 2009 - present: Director representing francophone members, PSAC Atlantic
- ♦ PSAC Representative, NBFL Executive Council
- ♦ Coordinator, Facilitator and Chaperone for the Blair Doucet Summer Youth Camp, NBFL
- ♦ Vice President Women's Issues, NBFL

Shanny's dedication and involvement has earned her the 2019 **Women in Leadership Award** from the NBFL.



It's bursary season at GSU!

At GSU we believe that everyone should have equal access to opportunity, and that includes access to higher education.

GSU offers three scholarships of \$2,000 each to students who are dependents of GSU members in good standing and who are enrolled in a full-time post-secondary institution.

Members of the GSU National Council as well as some Local executives participate in various internal committees that oversee areas of interest to GSU. One such committee is the Union Recognition Committee (URC). One of the responsibilities of this committee is to analyze the bursary applications received and determine the recipients. The members of the Union Recognition Committee are

- Anthony Drozdowski (Chair), RVP Nova Scotia
- Heather Rawlins (Co-Chair), RVP Alberta, NWT and Nunavut
- Paul Paquette, RVP NCR
- Stéphanie Rochon, President Local 10011
- Edith Germain, Vice President Local 70055

♦ **A.F. Wood**, named in honour of a former member who made enormous contributions in the area of member education.

♦ **Jim Williams**, in honour of a fellow member who served in union office from 1977 to 1999 where he was later elected RVP after the Convention merger.

♦ **Bonnie Robichaud**, in honour of a woman who won a landmark sexual harassment case in the Supreme Court while holding numerous positions in Local 70019.

GSU also offers a \$2,000 bursary to members in good standing who are enrolled full or part-time in a post-secondary institution. The **Bob Haywood** Memorial Bursary, in honour of a tireless union activist and a man of great conviction who was committed to improving the world in which we live.

To learn more about our bursaries and how to apply, visit our website at: <https://www.gsu-ssg.com/en/gsu-bursary-and-awards/gsu-bursary>

AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

Did you know that GSU also has awards?

GSU has three awards:

- Life Member Award, to honour members who have given outstanding service over the years, this is the highest award a member can receive.
- Honourary Award, to honour individuals who have made a significant contribution to the union.
- GSU Award of Merit, for members who have rendered service of the highest distinction and who have made a major contribution to any level of the organization.

For more information, visit our [website](#)!

Let's Talk Representation!



Are you being harassed at work? We can help you!

Harassment is one of the most serious and debilitating situations a worker or group of workers can face. Harassment can be complex and difficult because it deals with power relationships, emotions, and biases.

In the 2020 Public Employee Survey, 11% of workers reported experiencing harassment on the job. 27% of these workers took no action.

Harassment comes in many forms. It can be defined as engaging in a series of vexatious comments or behaviors towards a worker that are known or should be reasonably known to be unwelcome.

Harassment includes:

Verbal, physical or visual forms of harassment ;

- ♦ Behavior or expressions that would offend any reasonable person;
- ♦ Inappropriate conduct that may or may not be intentional;
- ♦ A series of behaviors or comments that occur once or over a period of time, if the incident is serious, egregious, or constitutes a threat;
- ♦ Incidents where the victim does not expressly object to the harassment.
- ♦ Unwelcome comments or behavior that may or may not be directed at a specific individual; and
- ♦ Comments or behaviors that ridicule or denigrate a group and that may cause humiliation, insult, apprehension or disruption that poisons the environment.

Depending on your situation, your local union will be able to assist you. We have a few tools available to you, ranging from informal discussion and resolution to a formal complaint with a third-party investigator.

Harassment should never be tolerated or ignored! Reach out and we will help you.



Launched in November 2021, GSU Lunch & Learn Series is an opportunity for all activists to learn more about various topics related to their union.

You can watch all our sessions on our Youtube channel, live or recorded! Take advantage of this opportunity to subscribe and be among the first to know when a new video is published!



DID YOU KNOW

With the pandemic, PSAC has had to revise its education offerings. In addition to the courses offered by the regional offices, it is now possible to take some courses online, at your own pace. Ask your regional office about their in-person course offerings or go to the [PSAC website](#) to see the on-line course available.

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The 19th PSAC Convention will be held virtually from Monday, May 30 to Friday, June 3, 2022, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (EDT).

If you are a member in good standing, you may register for the Convention as an observer at no charge. However, you will be responsible for the expenses associated with your participation.

You have until May 2 to register for the conference. <https://psacunion.ca/convention-registration-open-for-observers>

UPCOMING GSU EVENTS

National Council Retreat
April 26-27 2022

National Council Meeting
April 28 2022

Local Presidents' Conference
September 2022

Young Workers Conference
November 2022