

MUNFA President's Update – Friday, February 3, 2023

Hello all,

A BIG thanks to everyone, our members, students, all the supporting unions, all the picketers from universities across Canada, and especially the members of the public that came to the rallies today. It's cold out there, and all our lives are disrupted at the moment, but solidarity is powerful — I know everyone is feeling the same thing — working together we can fix the problems at Memorial.

A brief up-date on where we stand.

Although the administration is not negotiating at the moment — they seem to be spending most of their time working on new ways to upset parts of the university community — we remain confident that we will make progress on our key demands.

On fairness and security for **contract academic staff** — we cannot accept the current work environment for precarious members. Many of our contractual members are making more through strike pay than they would at the job as instructors, despite having worked for MUN for many years. It is very rare for employers to not offer long-term employees some basic job security — we continue to press for a deal that addresses the needs of our most vulnerable members. **WE ARE ALL UNITED IN FIGHTING FOR THESE MEMBERS!**

On **collegial governance** — many of you will have seen the news that there is already interest from the government in discussing part of our concerns. Administration has said they would NEVER negotiate on “collegial governance” despite its being a core principle of university governance. We believe our concerns are on the table now. **WE KEEP FIGHTING FOR DEMOCRACY!**

On **post-retirement health benefits** — we cannot accept administration's attempt to undermine our system of post-retirement health and dental benefits — this is about dividing members and it is the first step in making major changes in our pension system. **WE WILL FIGHT THIS.** We believe that our demands are reasonable and can be met by administration. They have admitted as much themselves — it's a bad proposal.

On **salaries** — the strike is not about money — we know that the university is already prepared to make major concessions. Although our demands are modest, and that they will not address what we lost from high inflation and years of a wage freeze, we will get a much better deal than Administration has tried to insist on. **WE WILL GET A FAIR DEAL FOR ALL!**

Working together, we can make progress on all of our concerns. This is a once-in-a-generation labour dispute at Memorial. We must seize this opportunity and not waste the support so many have offered us.

Have a great weekend and come back stronger on Monday!

STRONGER TOGETHER!

Ash Hossain
President, MUNFA