AGENDA:

1. Call to Order
2. Land Acknowledgement
3. Anti-Harassment Statement
4. Recap of Bourinot’s Rules of Order
5. Approval of Agenda
6. Approval of Minutes from Stewards Meeting (March 23rd, 2022)
7. Interim President Introduction
8. Bargaining Updates
9. Motions
   a. Motion 1 – Transfer of $50,000 from General Reserve account to Financial Assistance Funds
   b. Motion 2 – Increase in Mobilization Budget Line
   c. Motions from the floor?
10. Executive Reports
    A. Presentation of report from the President
    B. Presentation of report from the Grievance Chair
    C. Presentation of report from the Admin Chair
    D. Presentation of report from the Communications Chair
    E. Presentation of report from the Racial Equity Chair
    F. Presentation of report from the Postdoc Chair
    G. Presentation of report from the Gender Equity Representative
    H. Presentation of reports from the Chief Stewards
       a. Arts and Humanities
       b. Biological Sciences
       c. Physical Sciences
       d. Social Sciences
       e. Postdoc
11. New Business
12. Motion to Adjourn
On October 30th and 31st the PSAC 610 GTA bargaining team was in negotiations with the University of Western Ontario.

Both teams met for the first time and developed a rapport that allowed for some dialogue. The collective deliberations encompassed several non-monetary matters as presented by your Team and by the Employer. Your team subsequently formulated counterproposals. It is noteworthy that numerous issues are still pending discussion at the bargaining table, including topics of a monetary nature which are slated for consideration in forthcoming sessions.

Some examples of articles that were discussed are:

**Article 8: Union Security**
**Article 10: Services and Facilities**
**Article 13: Appointments**
**Article 17: Hours of Work**
**Article 30: Training**
Your team is well-prepared and committed to engaging in forthcoming bargaining sessions, which are scheduled for December 12th, 13th, and 20th. We remain steadfast in our dedication to advancing the objectives outlined in your mandate. The pursuit of a fair and comprehensive collective agreement, one that faithfully reflects your interests at Western University, is presently in motion.

We look forward to keeping you up to date on this exciting process.

In solidarity,

The PSAC 610 GTA Bargaining Team
Mahmoud Bagheri
Pardis Baha
Nadav Benjamin
Darren Pacione (PSAC Researcher)
Elpis Law (PSAC Negotiator)
MOTIONS:

MOTION 1: Transfer of $50,000 from General Reserve account to Financial Assistance Funds

Whereas The new year's Financial Assistance funds are scheduled to be deposited in January 2024.

Whereas There has been a significant increase in demand for financial assistance applications compared to previous years.

Whereas The existing balance of $54,358 in our Financial Aid account is insufficient to meet the growing needs of our members until January 2024.

Whereas A transfer of funds would address the current strain on our Financial Aid account and will ensure that we can effectively support our members facing financial challenges.

Whereas The proactive management of our reserves is essential to fulfilling our mandate and upholding the values of our union.

Be it resolved that An amount of $50,000 be transferred from our General Reserve account to the Financial Assistance account.

Motion 2: Increase in Mobilization Budget Line

Whereas The union has reserve funds that have been saved over the last several years to support bargaining.

Whereas The Mobilization Team plays a critical role in the success of bargaining, which is ongoing.

Whereas The increasing efforts of the Mobilization Team are essential to enhance its effectiveness in engaging our members.

Whereas Adequate financial resources are crucial to expanding the operations of the Mobilization Team and ensuring a successful bargaining process.

Whereas Operating costs for the Mobilization Team include paying mobilizers for activism and holding mobilization events.

Whereas An increase in the mobilization budget is necessary to provide the Mobilization Team with sufficient funds to execute a comprehensive and impactful mobilization strategy.

Be it resolved that The budget line for mobilization be increased from $5,000 to $55,000.
REPORTS:

Report for the President
prespsac610@gmail.com

Dear Members,

Thank you for your efforts this term. Your tireless efforts to support the learning and development of students on campus is much appreciated. Below you will find a brief summary of the key activities within the union over the past 6 months. Further details will follow.

GTA Bargaining
- Feedback was solicited from the membership as the basis for monetary and non-monetary proposal packages.
- The bargaining team began caucusing to review members’ concerns in August in preparation for bargaining in the fall.
- Bargaining sessions with the employer began on October 30th and will continue over the coming months. Please stay tuned to your email for updates from the bargaining team.

Mobilization
- Mobilization efforts have ramped up over the last several months to support bargaining.
- The mobilization team’s efforts in physical and social mapping, canvassing, and generally keeping lines of communication open with members to keep everyone up to date have been immeasurably and highly effective. Thank you to all for your efforts. If you are interested in getting involved, please reach out to Jack at commspac610@gmail.com.

Collective Agreement Enforcement
- The Chief Steward have been working hard to identify issues within their respective divisions to be resolved with the employer.
  o Several of these issues have been raised at LMC meetings with the employer and resolved informally.
  o Several grievances have been filed to address concerns that were not able to be resolved informally.
  o Many of these issues have been included in the monetary and non-monetary bargaining packages.

GSA/GRA Arbitration
- We have received a favourable arbitration ruling 5 years in the making.
- It has been ruled that any work considered TA work must be contracted as a GTAship (ie. cannot be contracted out as a GSA or GRA), and workers are entitled to protections and compensation per the GTA collective agreement.
Report for the Administrative Chair
grievance.psac610@gmail.com

Postdoc Collective Agreement is Finalized

- Met with the Employer at the table May 11th to reach the agreement that was ratified
- Monetary Highlights of the PDA New CA
  - Compounded economic increase of 15% to the minimum salary floor over the life of the agreement
    - Retroactive to 1 May 2023, 8.6% increase, from $34,425 to $38,500
    - Effective 1 January 2024, 3% increase, $39,655
    - Effective 1 January 2025, 2.75% increase, $40,845
  - Lump sum payment of $600 for all active employees as of the date of ratification, to be paid within 60 days of ratification
- We will be seeking similar gains for TAs

GTA Bargaining has Begun

- We have set the precedent for PDA bargaining and will carry that momentum into TA bargaining
- Non-monetary demands set and presented to University
- Team update given earlier in agenda

Labour Management Committee Meetings (PDA and GTA)

TA LMC Discussion:
- Staffing Access Issues
- Transport Cos of GTA Work
- Desk Availability
- Consistency with TA Hour Allotment
- TA Training Necessity
- Improper DSA Utilization by Faculty

Ongoing Grievances

- Individual: wrongful termination case – being assessed for arbitration
- Individual: reduction of funding – handled by local office
- Individual: funding issue for TAship – currently in formal stage
- Individual: maternity leave not issued – awaiting response from HR
- Policy: Staffing Access
- Policy: not giving notice of disciplinary meeting - seeking PSAC guidance

POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT ARBITRATION RULING – GSA CLASSIFICATION

Sincerely,
Grievance Chair - grievance.psac610@gmail.com
Dear Members,

Thank you for all your TA work this term. Some updates from the administration are discussed below.

**Staffing and Office Operations**

**Staff Changes**
The Local would like to thank Patti for her time and dedication for several years holding the office manager role. Subsequently, we would like to thank Jayanthi for taking this role as she has put a great effort in this new position over the past couple of months since August 2023.

**Changes in benefits**
As previously communicated in our Steward meeting, we are streamlining our application process. Separate applications for Covid-19 Relief and Work from Home funds are no longer required, given the improved conditions. With most student operations returning to in-person mode, we are no longer accepting applications for these specific categories. However, we encourage you to submit medical applications as needed. Additionally, in the case of special incidents incurring financial costs, please provide receipts and apply for personal emergencies.

I am pleased to share that, with the aid of the previous finance committee and Ryley, our former administration chair, we have successfully doubled the funds allocated for food support applications. The approved amount for each member applying for food support has now increased to $150.

**Changes in budget lines for Mobilization and Financial Aid**
In alignment with recent motions, we are taking steps to enhance our support structures. Funds are being transferred from our general reserve account to bolster the budget lines for both mobilizations and financial aid. This strategic allocation aims to provide ample resources for our mobilization team to expand their efforts and ensure we can accept and approve as many eligible applications as possible in our financial aid account.

**Finance**

**Financial Statements**
The total bank account balances as of November 16, 2023 are the following:

- Health (Chequing-0): $ 850,673.24
- General (Chequing-1): $ 731,443.98
- Financial Aid (Chequing-2): $ 54,358.00

**Audits**
Our 2022-2023 audit of all divisions is complete (see financial package). Please take some time to review the audits and financial reports. Our main recommendation from our auditor is to develop a financial spending plan to reduce some of the reserve funds we have accumulated over the last 5 years or so. The finance committee can meet to discuss possible spending.

**Committee Reports**

**Food Support Committee**
The food support committee has been working hard to keep application rankings going. Thank you to all members of the committee for their work, and its chair, Reza Khazaee.

The goal of the Local is to offer more money towards food support in the coming budget round and this will be a bargaining demand as well.

**Financial Assistance Committee**
The financial aid committee have new members, and chair. These committees have been operating continuously to rank applications and expanded their efforts and limits to increase the number of approved applications and address the increased number of received applications. Thank you to all the new members who joined the committee.

**Office Manager**

1. Almost thrice the number of applications were received during the month of August 2023 compared to the usual number of receipts. Due to this high volume of receipt, we had exceeded the processing time of 4 weeks for benefits applications. I had also attended to making AFT entries in addition to processing these applications.
2. Payments were made by AFT for about 78% of the approved applications, only a small amount was through cheque payment.
3. Due to the high volume of applications, FA and FS payments were processed during mid-October in addition to the normal end-of-the-month AFTs.
4. During Aug-Sep, I also attended work relating to Orientations, revising of application forms in addition to processing benefits applications which led to a backlog in processing applications.

Currently, I have brought the processing to normal levels and responses are being sent about 2 weeks after receipt of the application.

**SOGS Updates**

**Research Completion Subsidy**
The Local will continue to contribute to the research completion subsidy. This fund provides financial assistance (up to $500) to members experiencing financial precarity and who are past their funding eligibility for their program. PSAC sponsors this fund to help members who have at one point been a member during their graduate studies. Applications will continue to be accepted through SOGS.

In solidarity,

Sohrob Milani
Report for the Communications Chair
Jack Kausch
commspsac610@gmail.com

Communications Report:
• Working with IT to resolve emails going into junk! The emails are going into junk because of a Microsoft AI malfunction. We are working with microsoft to fix it
• If this is still happening to you, please mark our emails as safe next time you find them in junk.

Mobilization Report:
• The Respect Our Research rally was a success: we had almost 200 people out there
• We are in bargaining now! Right now the mobilization team is getting the word out about bargaining events
• If you would like to join the mobilization team, write to me!
• We want as many members as possible to come out to the meeting when we will have either a ratification or a strike vote!
• If we vote to strike over an issue, PSAC regional will pay us to picket at our hourly wages.
• We may have some events/protests in January/February so stay tuned!
Hello PSAC610 membership,

I want to thank you all for the opportunity to serve you since I took office in May 2023. This year has been particularly busy, especially considering the bargaining environment we find ourselves in, as well as the need to show support and solidarity for other unions on campus and beyond.

As the racial equity chair, I have actively pursued the interests of the union regarding achieving equity for our membership on campus and increasing the visibility of racialized members. Furthermore, as a delegate of the local at gatherings focused on matters related to racial equity and inclusion, I have represented and furthered the conversation at multiple levels, including the PSAC Ontario 9th Triennial Convention that was held earlier this year. The Political Action and Social Justice Committee (PAC/SJ), under my purview, has been vibrant in promoting and supporting solidarity events both on and off campus. Overall, I can say that the team of executives you entrusted to lead the union has been fruitful, although, of course, more needs to be done.

We will keep working to uphold the mandate of the union and identify and transform any systematic barriers that affect our academic workers, particularly our racialized and international community.

Below are some of the areas we have made significant progress thus far, particularly those specific to the racial equity chair.

**Labour EDI Survey:**
- Picking up from where my predecessor left off, I have re-initiated communications with the director of human resources at Western and the data consultant to discuss the analysis of the EDI Survey. I have had several meetings with both the human resources director and the analyst to discuss the key themes of analysis, which should be completed soon.

**Advocacies:**
- The union president and I met the new Graduate Academic Advisor & EDI Specialist in the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to discuss strategic programs to improve support for graduate students, especially those from equity-deserving groups.

- Together with some other unions in Southwestern Ontario, our local played a key role in successfully petitioning the REV to charter a Racially Visible Committee, which aims to create an inclusive space for newer racialized members.

**Community building events toward collective action:**
- Townhall: Over the summer, I organized and facilitated the Racialized and International Students Townhall. This event was part of the union’s effort to develop a comprehensive record of the unique challenges that beset our racialized members.
• Rallies: The PAC/SJ has been at the forefront of multiple rallies to show solidarity. A few of these include the Student March for Gaza, Ceasefire Rally, Status for All Rally, Justice for Migrant Workers Event and No Place for Hate Rally.

• I arranged with the International & Exchange Student Centre to facilitate a presentation on "Immigration Q&A for international students."

• I am also an active delegate of the local to District Labour Council (LDLC) where I have also been elected as an executive for the Member at Large position. Through the LDLDC, we have received vital information on union developments in Ontario. The LDLC has also strongly supported our solidarity events as well as other unions on campus (e.g. UWOFA, Librarians and archivists and Engineers rallies)

**Other events:**
• I participated in the UWOFA picket captain training.
• I presented on the union at some department orientations.
• Bargaining and Mobilization: I am part of the mobilization design and strategy team.
• Academic Labour Appreciation Week 2023: I was part of the organizing team.
• I attended the Union’s town hall held over the summer to discuss any issues you may want to bring up with the bargaining team.
• I attended the Potluck Picnic scheduled organized over the summer.

In solidarity,
Evans Batung
PSAC 610- Unit2 provides support to the postdoc members of the union in addition to the support for general members. The team has been working with members closely after a full year of bargaining and ratification of the new collective agreement to make sure members are aware of the latest changes and their benefits as well as major updates on their rights and responsibilities reflected in the new collective agreement. There are a few highlights that I would like to share with members/stewards in this report:

A) Collective agreement:
- Organized town halls and bargaining updates and highlighted the new changes in the collective agreement, responded to the questions and addressed some concerns.
- Updated the newly collective agreement in our Union`s portal, responded to specific questions received from members

B) Financial committee:
1- The financial committee reviewed all applications received by August 2023 deadline.
2- Members should have all received the notification regarding their application and instructions on how to receive their cheques (if approved).
3- The next round of applications will be reviewed sometime in February 2024. The upcoming deadline is January 2024.

C) Members Support
- A couple of members were involved in grievance applications regarding their termination and requested support from the Union. A series of meetings were organized, and communications is still in progress at the arbitration level. One of the members withdrew their application after the informal meeting with the other case proceeded to the assessment, pending for arbitration.
- Members support through several emails, in-person, and zoom calls. The unit provided support to almost all PDAS who reached out to the team and provided feedback as needed. There is not any open case currently within the union and all the enquiries should have already been addressed or in progress by the union to support our members.

Thanks to all general members, especially stewards who assisted the union this semester. We are currently looking for a few more interested Postdocs to join the union as the PDA steward and/or committee members this year. Your support is the Union`s power and as always really appreciated.

In Solidarity,
Postdoc Chair
Since the beginning of my tenure as the Gender Equity Officer from May 2023, 
Thanks to your involvement in greater PSAC610, I have heard a lot of grievances that were brought to me by members relating to-

- Not enough/No women’s/inclusive washrooms in certain old buildings, which is a health and safety concern for our members.
- Campus staff and dependent health clinic where our Postdoc members go, denied access to same gender doctors for intimate tests that drove away member from getting tests done - no alternative was arranged as promised on the website.
- Access to lounge/common area in a workplace is an employee’s right. Access to microwave during lunch is lacking in departments making our members’ life harder.
- Departmental staff members not sending out properly written emails when addressing gender diverse groups – disrespectful!
- Lots of queries/grievances around maternity leaves.

These concerns have been brought up with the Western EDI group and these issues will be taken up to the concerned governing bodies in Western. Are you facing similar or different issues on campus? – Please tell us

**GOAL** of this year will be to hear a lot from you, the members, about equity and inclusivity breach on campus. Soon end of this year/early next year, a survey will be sent out as well. Collecting data this year will help us get better gains from university in the coming years.

**Gender Equity Committee and Solidarity Events**

Gender Equity committee organized an online workshop on Trans-inclusionary education in workplace which was very well received with amazing feedback and interest in hosting more such events in the departments. Thanks to all the people (>50) who showed up for it.

GEC and Pride Ad hoc committee worked on proposing valuable changes to the collective agreement ahead of the bargaining.

**Community outreach**

As part of Ontario Triennial Convention of PSAC610, I spoke to the room of more than 200 delegates about the need to start three scholarships for women/Gender diverse folx in academia.

Our committees have tried to support rallies and movements happening in London.

**Ad-hoc Pride Committee Activities**

**Introduction:**

The PSAC Pride Committee, comprising six dedicated members and the Gender Equity
Commissioner, has been actively engaged in initiatives to enhance equity and inclusivity for 2SLGBTQIAPS+ teaching assistants and post-docs. This report outlines the committee’s recent endeavors and achievements.

1. Proposed Changes to improve the Collective Agreements:

The Pride Committee has diligently reviewed and proposed changes to the Teaching Assistant (TA) and post-doctoral collective agreements. The primary goal is to foster inclusivity and ensure these agreements better represent the interests of LGBTQIAPS+ members within the university community. Some suggestions are the need for better definitions for terms (for example, spouse, family member in the personal emergency leave section) used in these documents and the use of pronouns. Our suggestions to improve the collective agreement is attached to this report.

2. Equity and Wellness Survey:

In collaboration with the Gender Equity Committee, the Pride Committee has initiated an equity and wellness survey. This comprehensive survey assesses the university members’ physical, mental, and social well-being. Special attention is given to identifying safety concerns, particularly for individuals who identify as 2LGBTQIA+ or belong to other equity-deserving groups within the educational and working environment. A draft of the survey is attached to the report.

3. Gender-Focused Event:

The Pride Committee is actively working on organizing a gender-focused event. This event will feature trans and gender-nonconforming speakers, providing a platform to discuss pertinent issues. Additionally, the committee plans to conduct round-table discussions to assess the specific bargaining needs of trans and gender-nonconforming members, further informing discussions on collective agreements within the community. The proposal for the gender-focused event is attached to the report for reference.

4. Collaboration with the Gender Equity Committee:

Recognizing the intersectionality of issues related to equity, the Pride Committee collaborates closely with the Gender Equity Committee. Together, they address matters pertaining to gender or gender expression, working towards a more inclusive and equitable university environment.

In solidarity,
Mria (She/Her)
Stewards Positions
Positions remain open in Languages & Cultures (1), Classical Studies (1), Visual Arts (1), English & Writing Studies (1), Library and Information Science (1), French Studies (1), Music (2), and Philosophy (2). If you know of someone in these departments who would be a good steward, let them know to reach out!

Grievances and Collective Agreement Questions
So far in my term, no grievances have been filed, which can be a good thing or a bad thing. It’s good in that it might signal that our members are not facing serious contract issues, but it could also mean that members do not know what resources they have in the union. Be sure to make yourself known to your department as the steward and that you and/or I are available to answer contract questions and discuss further options.

Overtime
As we wind down the semester (but wind up in our workload) remember that if you work more than 10 hours in a week, you are entitled to overtime pay—$70.83 an hour! Be sure to let members know to track their hours if they feel they are working more than they should so they can take advantage of this benefit that we are contractually entitled to!

Steward Allocation and Voting
I’ve been working on exploring better and more equitable ways to allocate stewards across departments and streamline voting in our meetings. Some departments have shared that their number of members increase significantly in the winter terms. So, we are exploring making stewards allocation calculations based on both the previous winter and the current semester’s number of members per department and choosing the option for each department that results in more stewards. Further, you’ll notice at this meeting that we’ll be piloting rcv123.org as a voting platform to avoid spending time at the beginning of meetings assigning codes to members and during the meeting sending members into breakout rooms.

Outgoing Executive Members
A huge thanks goes to Wes Robinson and Karuna D’Souza, who have served our union for years but have recently had to step back from their roles in our Local. Their work has made an unforgettable and tangible impact on our members.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any question you have!

In solidarity,

Nadav Benjamin
artschiefstewardpsac610@gmail.com
Dear Members,

Thank you for your continued efforts. It has been a pleasure serving as the Biological Sciences Chief Steward thus far. I look forward to continuing meeting members of our local and supporting you to the best of my ability. Below you will find a summary of what has been happening within my portfolio. If you have any questions, concerns, or just want to introduce yourself, please don’t hesitate to reach out at bioscichief610@gmail.com.

Soliciting Feedback

- I started my tenure by reaching out to all the 2022-2023 stewards to meet and solicit feedback.
- The information gathered in these meetings has been invaluable to the union. Several policy violations were identified and put forward for informal resolution at LMC meetings and formal resolution via grievance. Furthermore, the information gathered helped us identify inconsistencies in how the collective agreement is being administered across departments, which the bargaining team is leveraging during bargaining.
- Thank you to all involved. Your efforts are truly appreciated and have made a meaningful contribution to the local.

Grievances

- There are several ongoing grievances at various stages in the Biological Sciences division including but not limited to:
  - Allocation of TAships out of keeping with the prioritization outlined in the collective agreement
  - Maternity leave
  - Wrongful termination
  - Not giving notice of disciplinary meeting
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding the administration of the collective agreement in your department or for your own TAship, please don’t hesitate to get in touch. Reaching out doesn’t mean you have to file a grievance; often times we are able to provide clarification and help resolve concerns informally without filing a grievance. And if we are unable to help resolve your concerns informally, the decision to file a grievance (or not) is always in your hands.

Long Term Planning

- I have been working with the other Chief Stewards to coordinate our efforts across divisions better.
- One of the main initiatives we are working on is to put in place better documentation and turnover practices to ensure better institutional knowledge transfer in future years so that future Chief Stewards can better support members.

Steward Recruitment

- I am still actively recruiting stewards within the Biological sciences division. There are openings in the departments listed below. If you are interested in getting involved, please don’t hesitate to reach out at bioscichief610@gmail.com,
- Kinesiology – 2 positions available
- Chemistry – 2 positions available
- Biology – 2 positions available
- Medical Biophysics – 1 position available
- Health and Rehabilitation Sciences – 3 positions available
- Microbiology and Immunology – 1 position available
- Neuroscience – 3 positions available
- Nursing – 2 positions available
- Orthodontics – 1 position available
- Pathology & Laboratory Medicine – 1 position available

**Future Plans**

- I intend to work closely with stewards to understand the ongoing needs within the departments under the Biological Sciences division to ensure that we understand members’ work-related concerns and are able to effectively support members.

Thank you,

Pardis Baha
1. Throughout the year, I convened several steward meetings to address challenges related to tracking TA hours, appeals for renegotiating TA contracts to accommodate additional responsibilities, departmental funding issues, and the imperative of fostering improved communication among stewards within the department.

2. In my capacity as a member of the Bylaws committee, I conducted multiple sessions with GTAs from my division to clarify the functioning of the committee and guide them on how to effectively exercise their rights.

3. Accompanied three TAs from distinct departments in meetings with both the administration and their respective course instructors.

4. Within EC meetings, I conveyed the concerns of TAs in their departments, such as accommodation issues and the need for gender-specific washrooms in certain buildings. These insights paved the way for subsequent targeted actions.

5. Organised the recruitment of several stewards to fill vacant positions within the Physical Science Division, an ongoing effort.

6. Currently, actively contributing to the organization of the GRA/GSA union in collaboration with PSAC 610.

7. Manage a Facebook group comprising GTA members from the Bangladeshi community, promoting a sense of community and facilitating communication.

8. Conducted multiple drop-in information sessions on behalf of PSAC 610, disseminating crucial information to interested GTAs.

9. Assisted the payment for overtime TA hours in Physics and Biomedical Engineering departments for four GTAs.

10. Attended and presented at nearly all Fall Orientation, 2023 programs across various departments under the Physical Science Division on behalf of PSAC 610.

11. Ensured that every GTA within the Computer Science Department has a designated desk, promoting a conducive work environment.

In Solidarity
Sadia Yeasmin
Chief Steward, Physical Science Division.
Attended and presented at the orientations of Departments in the Social Sciences (Economics, Law, Education, Political Science, Sociology, and Psychology) from September to August, where I discussed general information about the PSAC union, mobilization for our bargaining and GRA and GSA unionization.

Organized PSAC 610 drop-in sessions on August 22, 2023, where I responded to member inquiries on PSAC 610 benefits (e.g., summer support and health benefits).

I sent out emails to members in the Social Sciences about steward roles. I handled inquiries about PSAC 610 steward positions, elections, and the number of steward positions available in each department.

I reviewed the Duty Specification Agreement (DSA) and PSAC 610 Collective Agreement with members who need more information or have questions about their GTA contract and duties.

I attended the Respect Our Research Rally held by PSAC 610 on September 20, 2023.

I had discussions with some stewards about organizing solidarity events in their respective departments.
Below is a summary of the work I have done since I was elected in May 2023 as the Postdoc Chief Steward:

- Attended orientation for newly appointed Postdocs and presented information about the Union (PSAC 610)

- At our Workers’ Celebration Week in the summer, we introduced new PDAs to the Union

- During the period when departmental steward nomination was opened, I followed up on some PDAs who expressed interest in becoming departmental stewards, and also seconded their nominations

- Presented a revised Postdoc monetary and non-monetary packages to our Employer
  - Employer had immediate reservations about our housing package and did not consider it

- I invited Postdoc members to vote for ratification of our new collective agreement with our Employer (Western University)
  - Some postdocs came on day 1
  - Other postdocs also came on day 2

- I reviewed financial aid application of PDAs with the Postdoc Final Aid Committee.

- I co-organized Postdoc social events at the Grad Club and Town-hall meetings during which we updated members about our new collective agreement with our Employer and presented more information about the Union to members. This was an opportunity for members to ask questions during Q&A session. I was particularly impressed with the high turnout (45 participants) and we hope to improve on it. In addition, I responded to various concerns of members who contacted me via whatsapp

- I represented PSAC 610 at the committee meeting about Employee Assistance Program and at Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, which includes inspecting workplaces to identify health and safety hazards and helping to eliminate or reduce these hazards

- Completed Parts 1 and 2 of Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) training
  - Certificate awarded

- Attended PSAC Ontario Triennial Convention on Thursday, June 8 – Sunday, June 11
  - There were over 200 participants
  - It was a successful convention
• Attended Postdoc Lunch organized by Western at the atrium of the International and Graduate Affairs Building
  o Spoke about the Union to all members
  o Some members did not know about the Union while a few others knew about it but did not know the benefits and power of the Union
  o 10 members joined the Union’s whatsapp group for Western Postdocs

• Together with the Grievance Chair, we co-reviewed a special case report of one of our members at the Support Services Building

• Together with the Postdoc Chair, we attended a grievance meeting with Western concerning a decision made by Western on a special case of one of our members and later reviewed a response letter from Western on this case

• Formed a Recruitment Committee with the President and Administrative Chair and interviewed candidates for the Staff/Office position
  o Reviewed a report of the interview session and together we employed one of the candidates we interviewed

Future plans
• I intend to co-organize more Postdoc social events to meet old and new Postdocs in person and get to know more about their work-related concerns while I aim at driving the goals of PSAC 610 through building a stronger community of Postdocs in Western and creating/expanding professional networks

Thank you
In solidarity,
George J. Dugbarrey
(Postdoctoral Chief Steward)