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Your Monthly Newsletter from the SCFA

ON STREAM

SCFA Swag, Courtesy of iHub Micro-internship Funding



In October, SCFA member **Jessica** Adrain approached Leesa Dean, VP Membership Engagement, about supervising a Selkirk student for a 60-80 hour project. In exchange, the student would receive an \$1800 honorarium through iHub funding, offered through Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada.

KSA Ceramics student **Kalyx Morris** spent the past two months creating 45 beautiful SCFA mugs that we plan to give out in draws and to members who serve as stewards and/or on standing committees.

Leesa is currently working with two other KSA students who are creating custom T-shirts and a new, colorful SCFA banner we can use for special events like the Nelson Pride Parade.

HOLIDAY WISHES AND UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Dear members,

We hope this holiday season will allow you to momentarily disconnect from this aspect of your life (work) and reconnect with other areas that are often put aside during the busy semester, especially during challenging times within the college community. Whether it's reconnecting with hobbies, visiting with family and friends or some other grounding activity, your SCFA Executive wishes you all the best this holiday season.

Here are a few announcements and upcoming opportunities:

- Daryl Jolly, a long-time SCFA member who has recently returned from leave, will join the **Health and Safety Committee** as the Nelson representative.
- In response to the current International student situation and the impacts of decreased enrolment, members in targeted areas will receive **canvass options** in January—Takaia addresses this canvass in more detail in her report on page 2.
- The SCFA is still seeking a **standing committee representative** for FPSE's **Academic Governance Committee**. Learn more about this committee [here](#). Also, longtime PD Chair Coby VanderGaast will be retiring in the spring, so a new **PD Chair** will be needed. We hope to begin training someone in early 2025 before Coby's departure. Please let Takaia or Leesa know if you are interested in either position by **January 15th**.
- Before we head into bargaining in the spring, the SCFA hopes to create a **Job Action Committee**. You can signal your interest in this committee to anyone in the executive.

Happy holidays!

LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW: PRESIDENT'S REPORT



As we all prepare to take some time to rest and rejuvenate over the holiday season, I want to send my gratitude to every SCFA member for the work you do everyday. The work we do here collectively makes an immense impact on the lives of those who choose to come and study here and that is something we can all be proud of. This has been a difficult semester for many of us and there are continuing challenges ahead as we navigate the impacts of declining International student enrollments and resulting workload reductions. My hope is that for right now, you all take care of yourselves and find some time for fun and relaxation over the holiday break.

Before we head off for that break, I want to encourage you all to keep up with the communications from college leadership via the Selkirk College newsletter. That is where you can find the most up to date information about planning and next steps. We now have confirmation that **the college will be sending out a “canvass” to SCFA members which will be open from January 15-29th**. As per Article 6.4 in the Common Agreement, our employer is required to “make every reasonable attempt to minimize the impact of funding shortfalls and reductions on the workforce.” If there are to be workforce reductions (lay-offs), the employer will canvass employees in targeted areas to try and find volunteer solutions that might minimize layoffs. Instructors who might be affected by work reductions will be advised by the Dean prior to the canvass being sent out. Once sent, the canvass remains open for at least 14 days. There will be a variety of voluntary options made available to SCFA members that are intended to minimize the impact of workload reductions. Your VP Contract Administration, Shannon Shah, is working on a series of memos that will provide further details on the implications of some of these options (including Early Retirement Incentives, voluntary workload reductions and unpaid leaves of absence). It is also important to note that the college will consider all applications for these options but is not obligated to accept all of them – this process is intended to minimize workforce deductions. If you have any questions about the canvass, please reach out to your local Steward or anyone on the SCFA Executive.

In closing, I also want to emphasize how important it is for us to use our collective voices to bring this crisis to the attention of our communities and politicians. Along these lines, Selkirk College President, Maggie Matear, has published an Open Letter that has gained some traction (you can find that letter on MySelkirk) and FPSE is organizing meetings with local union presidents and MPs in our home ridings to facilitate lobbying efforts at the federal level. I will be participating in such a meeting in January and I will keep you updated on those broader efforts.

Above all, I send my best wishes to you and your loved ones this holiday season and I look forward to seeing you all again in the New Year.

In solidarity,

Takaia Larsen
SCFA President

PD SPOTLIGHT: ELIZABETH FERGUSON (AGAABEEKSAKI) –EXCERPT



This past September I was lucky enough to attend the 10th anniversary of the Buffalo Treaty celebrations on the Blood (Blackfoot) Reserve in Standoff, Alberta. It had been seven long years since I'd been to Blackfoot territory. I was smitten by the beauty of the prairie landscape. Coyote crossed the highway in front of me. He didn't look at me. In my way, if you run into coyote, you let four cars pass by for that Trickster energy to dissipate. I was going too fast for that to happen. I offered tobacco and asked coyote to be kind to me. Trickster coyote is teacher and clown and can be a hard taskmaster, but coyote also encourages us to have fun and not to not take life too seriously.

-Elizabeth Ferguson (agaabeeksaki)

The Buffalo Treaty is a methodology for reinforcing identity. It speaks to sustainability and renewal and offers a path forward away from residential fractures. Leroy Little Bear explained that the Buffalo Treaty is not a contractual agreement, rather, it is a process for the revitalization of identity that also disintegrates conflicts imposed by colonial interferences. It is an ancestral blueprint that reinforces Indigenous identity. It is reconciliation and decolonization in action. Nations traditionally at odds with each other sign the treaty because it resonates with indigenous being. It is about we, not me. It is about reciprocity and restoration, not ownership. When Buffalo protects the herd they form a circle around the herd and face outward. They are the only animal known to walk into the blizzard and not away from it. The treaty is about preservation, sustainability and protection of culture. After many years of consultation with the Elders, the Buffalo Treaty is a dream come true. There now lives a small herd of buffalo on the Blood reserve. With them came ecological manifestations and rhythms of sustainability. Many Indigenous Nations and allies have signed this living document in a pledge to uphold the principles of the treaty.

The Motokis Women's Buffalo Society opened every day with a blessing. We spent the day at Red Crow College and then later at the University of Lethbridge. Introductions were made and dignitaries acknowledged. We watched the film *Singing the Buffalo Home* and later at the university, *Iniskim*, produced by Amethyst First Rider. Leroy and Amethyst were gifted a Buffalo head.

For me it was a wonderful renewal of relationships with old colleagues and much joy. We closed the evening with big buffalo puppets heads that illuminate the night sky. Trickster, Napi, creator and clown glowed and we closed the night with a round dance!

Home to bed, no sleep, too much excitement! Up at seven for the long drive back to Standoff.

To read the full 3-page document about Elizabeth (agaabeeksaki)'s time in Alberta for the 10th anniversary celebrations of the Buffalo Treaty, please read the attachment sent with On Stream.

Additional resources:

Media on Buffalo Treaty

<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/video/9.6521964>

<https://globalnews.ca/video/10776796/blood-tribe-hosts-buffalo-treaty>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YgcI89JFrHE>

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=0oLsRi040Xw>

https://www.glenbow.org/blackfoot/teacher_toolkit/english/culture/socialOrganization.html

NEWS FROM YOUR COMMITTEES: BARGAINING

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2024 SCFA Bargaining Survey. A full report on the survey is coming after the holiday break, but in the meantime, here is a brief snapshot of some of results:

- We had 100 respondents with a healthy representation across demographic groups in terms of service areas, years of service, and instructional versus non-instructional. Non-regularized members, however, were proportionally under-represented.
- Member's Satisfaction with Employment: Although 83/100 members reported being mostly or completely satisfied with their employment at the college in a general sense, those numbers dropped significantly when considering their satisfaction with particular aspects of their employment. Members were least satisfied with workload at Selkirk College.
- 67% of members reported a meaningful increase in obligations they would describe as outside of their primary duties with many noting academic accommodations, student mental health, and learning and using related educational technology as main contributors.
- Bargaining Priorities: Wages and workload/workload calculations were the two issues most identified by members as priorities for this round of bargaining. They were selected twice as much as any of the other issues. After those two priorities, the issues identified in descending order were benefits, job security, class sizes, and resources.
- 87% of respondents indicated that they either would or might support job action. Improved pay followed by workload were the issues members identified as factors for which they would be most willing to engage in job action.

I will provide more quantitative and qualitative details in a full report in early 2025. However, even these preliminary findings reflect a clear theme in the survey responses about a desire to make improvements on how workload is calculated and compensated at the college.

Jonathan Vanderhoek
VP Bargaining

WGEC + CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION UPDATES

WOMEN AND GENDER EQUITY COMMITTEE:

The WGEC Committee members Marla Gonzales Placencia and Theresa Southam have contacted the college's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee about being a working group of this Committee including not only SCFA members but anyone else who works at the College who would like to collaborate on gender equity. Our President, Takaia Larsen, has supported us in this approach.

In the new year, WGEC committee reps will work with Marketing and Communications to put out a call for members and then, together will chart a course. Theresa was counseled during the provincial meeting this past autumn that while events, flag-raising, and campaigns are awesome, the group might be more effective examining policies, procedures and culture at the College.

They will attend provincial meetings again January 9 and 24th, 2025. They will take the advice about the most effective means of change to the group which will hopefully form soon. Watch for the callout in the All Employee newsletter and join them in this important work.

CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION:

Happy Holidays Everyone. Thank you so much for reaching out and asking questions regarding the changes happening at Selkirk College.

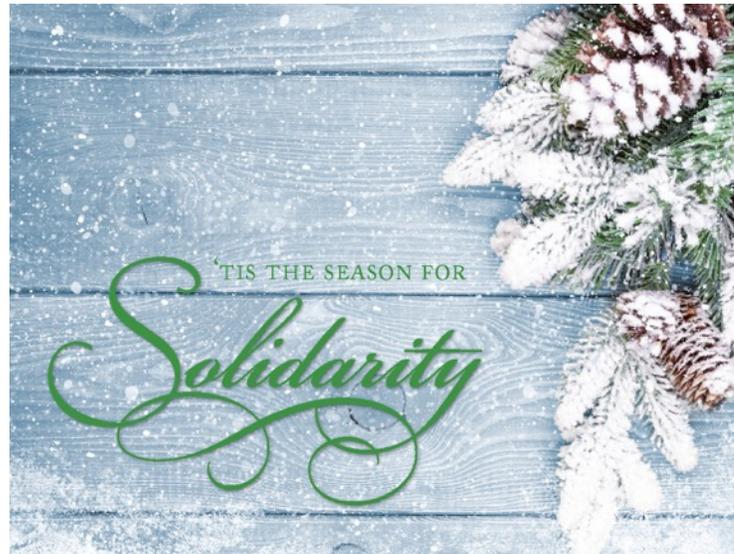
My new role as the VP Contract Negotiations has been a lot of learning and I will continue to do my best to support our SCFA members. Thank you for the positive feedback on the memos I prepared earlier this fall, and please watch for the next memos on the early retirement incentive plan (ERIP) and the canvass process set for mid-January. We are here to help you understand your options regarding all changes in work and would appreciate being linked into conversations.

See you in 2025, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year,

Shannon

Please reach out to Shannon Shah, VP Contract Negotiations (sshah@selkirk.ca) with any questions.

THE FINAL WORD: CARTOONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



REMINDERS, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:

- As we head into the final days of the year, be sure to use your **Health Care Spending and Lifestyle accounts**. You can use your \$250 lifestyle account for all kinds of things like sports equipment, fitness classes, ski passes... if you're not sure if your planned expense will be covered, feel free to email benefits@selkirk.ca to discuss. **The Lifestyle funds must be spent by December 31st and do not renew in 2025.**
- As we head into the bargaining period, we will be creating a **Job Action Committee**. Job action does not necessarily mean striking, although it is certainly an option if the situation demands it. However, job action can also include a variety of incremental measures, such as the withdrawal of participation in certain duties. The Job Action Committee's task is to ensure that we are logistically ready and prepared to engage in job action should it be required. If this is something that interests you, please reach out to the SCFA Executive.
- On Stream is always on the lookout for **submissions** relevant to our work, professional development, interests and well-being. We also feature a member in each issue. Send your ideas and/or member news at the beginning of each month to ldean@selkirk.ca, or let us know if we can feature you!

LOOK FOR MORE SCFA NEWS AT THE END OF JANUARY!