

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



November 2017

Hello everyone!

With bargaining behind us, UMFA is gratefully seeing a return to normal activity levels. Our staff have put in considerable hours over the last two years, and we owe them a huge debt of gratitude for their professionalism and commitment to our cause.

Things are not quiet, however. Grievances continue, teaching workload guidelines are in development, and the sex and salary, performance metric, and anomalies committees continue their work. We are supporting students in their opposition to Bill 31, continuing to support labour through the Manitoba Federation of Labour and the Winnipeg Labour Council, participating in the challenge to the Public Services Sustainability Act, and awaiting the Labour Board's decision on our Unfair Labour Practice claim.

It is also a time to take stock of where we are. An important priority for all of us is maintaining the solidarity that we built last year, and ensuring that we grow even stronger as we face continuing challenges from the government and university administration. Of course, the UMFA office is the place to come when you need help, but we want to devise other opportunities for everyone to see us, see each other, and get involved.

Our first step in this direction is our **Strike Celebration on November 22**, which you saw in our last [Fast Facts](#). Why are we celebrating the strike? We are mindful, of course, that

the strike was a difficult time for everyone. However, there was much to celebrate and that is what we want to remember. My own list includes:

- the camaraderie on the picket lines,
- meeting colleagues from all over campus,
- the tremendous support we received from our students, the student associations, parents, other unions, and members in the community,
- the carbohydrate-heavy diet,
- the parties at strike HQ on Friday nights,
- students bringing egg mcmuffins, doughnuts, cookies straight from the oven, and pickles (yes, that happened) to the picket lines,
- the members at strike HQ who were there all the time, particularly the greeters, drivers, and the job action committee,
- the music on the picket lines,
- the creative ways that our members used their talents to help out, from music, to food, to artistic picket signs, to communications,
- the unflagging, positive support of the UMFA staff.

We also need to celebrate not just the specific gains from the strike in the 2016 bargaining round, but what strikes represent. **Strikes represent workers coming together to find their voice and their power.** If you ask any member of the bargaining team to compare the behaviour of Administration at the table this past summer to their behaviour last fall, I believe they would say that it was very different in most respects. Just before our strike last fall, after many months of bargaining, Administration was rarely even meeting with us. They had withdrawn their salary offer and had refused our proposals on workload, performance metrics, and job security for librarians and instructors. During this past summer, in contrast, talks were generally efficient, cordial and productive.

Salary discussions, however, did not change positively. The Administration will still not stand up for our faculty, the lowest paid among the U15. The UM would not consider any salary proposal that was not strictly in compliance with the Public Services Sustainability Act (PSSA, or Bill 28) even though the Act has not been proclaimed into law. Even UMFA's reasonable proposal that any negotiated salary gains in excess of the PSSA be held in abeyance was unacceptable as the UM worried that the provincial government might be unhappy. Moreover, for the period of the contract extending past the PSSA "freeze",

Administration's positions were based on what they thought the government would find acceptable. Just like last year, the Administration allowed the provincial government to negotiate the salary part of this agreement. As a result, our ratification ballot indicated that the contract was negotiated under duress. For this reason, we need to celebrate not just our specific strike, but that we have the ability to strike when necessary as an essential element of collective bargaining.

Workers' rights are being attacked in many ways in this province and elsewhere: we need to maintain and strengthen our solidarity not just because it feels good, but because of the message it sends to our members, the labour community, the employer, and the government.

I hope to see many of you on **Wednesday, November 22 at Stone Angel Brewing (1875 Pembina Highway), 6-9 pm.**

Let's celebrate.

RSVP at FAUM@UMFA.CA

In solidarity,
Janet Morrill
UMFA President



NOVEMBER 22

ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY PARTY

Join us in celebrating the anniversary of the
2016 UMFA Strike!

We have a great evening planned for November 22, 6 - 9 pm at
Stone Angel Brewing (1875 Pembina Hwy).

Come out for food, drinks, and music.

See you there!

Please RSVP to [**FAUM@UMFA.CA**](mailto:FAUM@UMFA.CA).

We make **UofM** happen

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
Faculty Association



Copyright © 2017, University of Manitoba Faculty Association, All rights reserved.

**You are receiving this email because you are a member of the
University of Manitoba Faculty Association.**

Mailing Address:

100-29 Dysart Road, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3T 2M7

[Update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).