

D12 TEACHERS' BUZZ

Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation Toronto

Branch Presidents Workshop

On the weekend of October 24-26, OSSTF Toronto teachers hosted its annual Branch President's workshop. Over 80 branch presidents and branch executive members gathered at the Nottawasaga Inn for two days of training designed to support local leaders in their roles as front-line representatives of OSSTF in the workplace.



The weekend began with an important address by President Doug Jolliffe highlighting the numerous militant actions taken by the OSSTF Toronto Teachers leadership and its members and which resulted in many important gains, and the subsequent protection of those gains since the TDSB was created by amalgamation in 1997. As we move into another unprecedented round of bargaining, work site leaders were encouraged to move forward together with a spirit of teamwork and solidarity. To that end, Saturday morning began with a series of exercises that had branch leaders and members of the Toronto Teachers Executive working together to raise money for Kids Help Phone. In all, \$1000.00 was raised. The rest of the day focused on detailed scenarios of common issues dealt with by worksite leaders. Everything from member conflict to dealing with difficult principals and building engaged branches was covered in a way that allowed worksite leaders to talk and listen to one another, and share ideas for solutions.

The weekend wrapped up on Sunday morning with a report on current legal issues relating to Supreme Court cases that may have an impact on OSSTF's challenge to Bill 115. Ethan Poskanzer, senior lawyer at Sack Golblatt Mitchell provided a detailed overview of the cases. Provincial OSSTF president, Paul Elliot followed with an update on provincial issues and a report on the Ontario College of Teachers. Overall, local leaders left the weekend feeling energized and more equipped to represent the members in their schools. See pictures of the weekend on our [website](#).

Funding Available!

Did you know that OSSTF/ FEESO has bursaries available for the children of members who are pursuing post-secondary education? The Federation Family Education Fund offers bursaries that are awarded through a lottery system. Ten bursaries of \$1500 each are available this year. Applications are due on April 15. For more information or to apply, check out <http://www.osstf.on.ca/en-CA/services/awards-scholarships-grants-and-bursaries>

Upcoming Events

- * Nov. 25 —Chevrans Dirty Hand Workshop
- * Nov. 27—Retirement Workshop
- * Dec. 4 —Kathryn Maxwell Cook for the Cure Potluck
- * Dec. 11—STBU Council Meeting

Call the office or visit our website for more details about these events.

TRUSTEE ELECTIONS UPDATE

On October 27 2014, the municipal elections were held. OSSTF Toronto had great success in the election with 67% of endorsed trustee candidates winning seats at the Toronto District School Board. Half of the trustees are new to the Board and this promises to

be an exciting new time in the TDSB with over 2/3 of trustees expressing progressive views on education and labour.

Many thanks to the many volunteers who spent countless hours knocking on doors and working the

phones to ensure that endorsed candidates were elected.

OSSTF Toronto has a long and proud history of political action. The results of the municipal election show just how effective Toronto teachers can be.

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OSSTF Shines the Light on Violence Against Women

OSSTF Toronto is joining with Provincial Office in commemorating Women Abuse Prevention Month for November. November 25 marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Day 1 of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence. December 6 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre and is also the national Day of remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

The Shine the Light on Women Abuse campaign is a developed by the London Abused Women's Centre. Members are encouraged to use the colour purple where appropriate to draw awareness to this campaign. Purple is used as a symbol of cour-



age, survival and honour, and for the month of November, symbolizes the fight to end violence against women.

Logos (such as the one below) are also available from the provincial [website](#). In Toronto, we have changed the banner on our website, on our Facebook page and on our Twitter feed to reflect our participation in the campaign. As well, many members wore purple on November 14 to show their support.

Members are further encouraged to set up displays in their schools and worksites from December 1—5 commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Montreal Massacre. . You are encouraged to take a picture of your display and share it with OSSTF Toronto via Facebook or Twitter.

Members are also encouraged to attend our annual Kathryn Maxwell Cook for the Cure on December 4 where, in addition to raising money for breast cancer, there will be a special December 6th commemoration.

Upcoming Committee Meetings

Gay-Straight Alliance—November 25

Eco Committee—November 27

PD Committee—December 9

Political Action Committee—December 9

Human Rights Committee—December 11

Communications Committee—December 16

Gay-Straight Alliance—December 16



- Unless Otherwise noted, all meetings are open to all members and take place on the 4th floor at 1482 Bathurst Street at 4:30 pm. Refreshments are served. Parking is limited. The office is walking distance from St. Clair West subway station.

A special thanks to all of our members who volunteer to serve on committees! The work of OSSTF cannot be done without you!