



Some Highlights of Pat O'Neill's Dedicated Service

At AUFA's annual meeting, Dr. Patrick O'Neill (PSYC) received the CAUT Dedicated Service Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Acadia University Faculty Association. Pat's contributions have been long-term (for over 35 years), varied and crucial to the development of solidarity in our union.

Pat was chosen to be the chief negotiator for our very first collective agreement. He was chosen not just because he is mellifluous (!) but also because he was one of the few who had previous union experience (as a journalist) prior to launching his impressive research career. That first contract took 2 years to achieve. It set the tone for all others in so far as it paid special attention to two crucial aspects of our profession – academic freedom and the rights and duties of our job (scholarship, teaching, service). Pat continued in his commitment to academic freedom by being both a member and chair of the CAUT Standing Committee on Academic Freedom for many years. Throughout his career, he has continued to be engaged in the negotiating process both as a member and as the chair of AUFA's negotiating team.

Pat has been often on the AUFA Executive and has always pushed for the active involvement of our members in the affairs of our union. It was Pat who, early on when he was president of AUFA, made it AUFA's practice to have regular monthly meetings with sufficiently important content to draw a quorum. This practice of regular membership meetings has deepened the democratic character of our local and, indeed, defines our local as an example to all others. It is the root of our representative strength.

Pat was also a strong advocate for AUFA within the Department of Psychology. He was an active member of AUFA and led by example. Pat encouraged every member in the Department to take an

active role in AUFA, from attending monthly meetings to serving on the AUFA executive. He was a consistent source of support for Psychology faculty who served on various AUFA committees over the years, providing encouragement, guidance, and information to anyone who asked. He was always willing to take time out to discuss the history behind articles of the Collective Agreement and his institutional memory has been invaluable to members of the Psychology Department and AUFA as a whole. Pat also stressed the importance of thinking beyond the level of individual departments and ranks; he felt that the key to a strong union was considering how issues affect all members on campus.

Most recently, Pat has 'retired' to per-course and has, of course, made the equitable incorporation of part-timers a key issue for us to resolve. For Pat, what counts is that we continue to move forward as an even more genuinely solid academic institution. We share this direction.