

Convention At a Glance



**THOMAS ELECTED
TO 7th TERM**

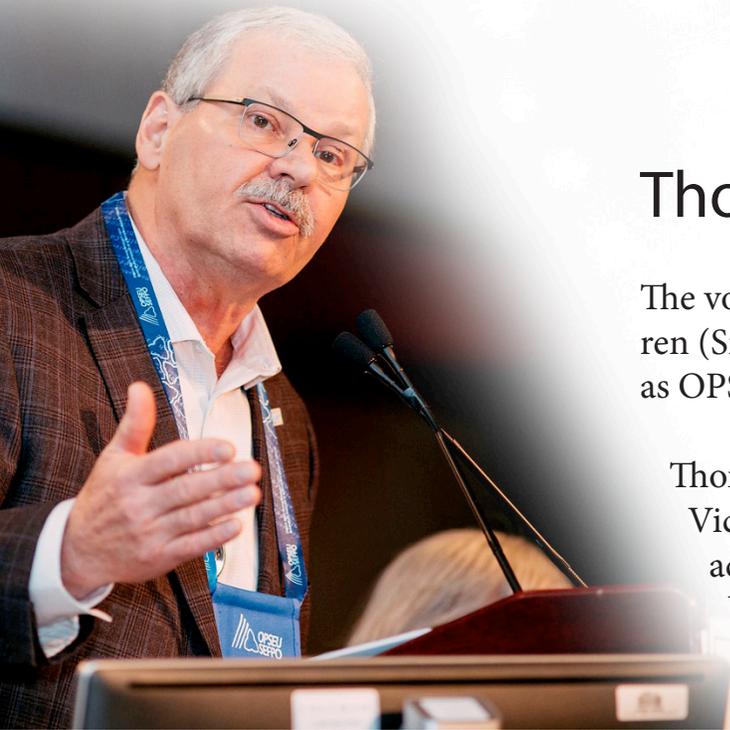
Convention events at a glance

Almeida acclaimed to another
two-year term

'No to the status quo':
Horwath

The professor and
privatization

Leah Casselman Awards



Thomas re-elected to 7th term

The votes were cast, the members have spoken, and Warren (Smokey) Thomas captured a record setting 7th term as OPSEU president – a position he has held since 2007.

Thomas defeated Sara Labelle, OPSEU Region 3 Vice-President. Eduardo (Eddy) Almeida was also acclaimed for his record fifth two-year term as First Vice-President/Treasurer.

Speaking to delegates, Thomas called OPSEU a “powerhouse” and praised members for building such a strong machine, describing it as a “force to be reckoned with.” He vowed to engage in respectful debate, to continue building the union, and to fight for a better, fairer, more inclusive Ontario.

A humbled Thomas expressed his appreciation to members for their vote of confidence.

“We’ve got a battle on our hands with the Ford government – and I’m looking forward to leading us to victory.”

The Revolution has begun!

In front of OPSEU’s largest Convention delegation ever, Warren (Smokey) Thomas gave a commanding speech on where our union is and the challenges ahead squaring off against austerity measures and Ford government.

“In all my years of union activism, my years on the Executive Board and as your President, I have never seen a government as destructive as the provincial Conservatives headed by Premier Doug Ford.

“We’re seeing a government move at incredible speed to dismantle public services, privatize and hurt the working class people of Ontario.”

Thomas continued by saying the tide is turning and the revolution has begun.

“We’re seeing people from all walks of life join us in our fight, and we welcome them. Whether they’re the parents of autistic children, seniors worried about health care cuts or Ontario citizens who mistakenly elected a government on the false premise of bringing help. The Ford government’s approval rating is plummeting, and through our actions and with our allies, we’ll get Premier Ford tossed from power and restore sanity to Ontario’s governance.”

He went on to congratulate the part-time college workers for achieving their first collective agreement, celebrated Corrections for a great deal from binding arbitration, and OPSEU’s continued success in organizing in all sectors of public service.

ALMEIDA ACCLAIMED!



Eduardo (Eddy Almeida) was once again acclaimed as OPSEU's First VP/Treasurer – and his financial and budget report was passed just as easily.

Although some concerns came to the floor, they had nothing to do with the financials and everything to do with Ford government and its savage attacks on our beloved public service.

Eddy addressed their concerns reassuring them our union will do everything it needs to protect OPSEU members' jobs and Ontario residents' services.

A hefty strike fund, plenty of assets and a man keeping a sharp eye on every expense eased delegates' minds and allowed them to pass the budget with few amendments.

Thank you to Brother Eddy Almeida and his team for all their hard work.



Horwath: 'No to the status quo'

NDP leader Andrea Horwath gave OPSEU delegates a pep talk in the face of the Ford government's attack on public services.

She opened her speech to Convention by saying, "We are not here to defend the status quo!"

Horwath went on to blast Premier Ford's drastic cuts to education, health care and other supports, painting a rather bleak future for Ontario unless we stand together and fight.

"Unions and working people are in Doug Ford's crosshairs!" Horwath said. She also pointed out how Ford's first budget only earmarked a mere \$1,000 towards a provincewide anti-racism strategy.

Horwath praised OPSEU members and the fight they're waging against the Ford agenda, notably the LCBO and its continuing fight to push back against privatization, as well as the ongoing struggle of Ontario corrections to fix the decades-old neglect evident in their current crisis situation.

She said the New Democrats will be an ally with OPSEU against the Ford agenda. "We are all the official opposition in Ontario. We are the resistance. This province belongs to us – all of us!"

Newbies discover Convention

The evening before the start of Convention, first-time delegates got the 411 on procedures and protocols, agenda listings, Roberts Rules and kits contents.

Following introductory observations of OPSEU policies, a number of attendee questions were answered, including queries on speaking order, microphone station and stages of voting. This was followed by a "how-to" on how to bringing of a motion to the floor.

Attendees were alerted to a budget presentation from First Vice-President/Treasurer Eduardo (Eddy) Almeida immediately following the new delegate event at 9 p.m. to help them vote on Thursday's formal budget presentation and vote on the Convention floor next day. Some guidance was also offered on microphone needs and mobility needs.



The seminar concluded with an introduction to Roberts Rules, described as the most widely used standard for ensuring business gets done – "and great nighttime reading." Delegates learned that a specialist on Roberts was tasked with sitting beside the President as an adviser – undoubtedly one of the most challenging – and important – positions at Convention.

CAAT-A bargaining team takes Casselman Award (Local)

The 2017 CAAT-Academic bargaining team snagged this year's Leah Casselman Award for a local. Chair JP Hornick accepted the award on their behalf.

In an impassioned speech, Hornick praised the team's commitment and commended members around Ontario for their support during the strike. She also thanked OPSEU research and communi-

cations for their help.

Some 1,300 full time and partial-load college faculty went on strike for five weeks before being legislated back to work by the Wynne Liberals. CAAT-A's mantras were "Educate, organize, mobilize" and "All of us or none of us."

"As long as we create a big enough, rowdy enough, tent, we will create a better future for all our workers," Hornick said, noting that the bargaining team's work continues with a challenge to Bill 148 – labour reform legislation currently at arbitration.



It's showtime!

Most of us attending Convention love our jobs. Because, were it not for our jobs, we wouldn't be OPSEU members – and, therefore, we wouldn't be able to attend Convention!

Beyond our jobs, what keeps us motivated are our real passions: our families, our hobbies, and the things we do to release tension, relax and focus on what makes us happy, whether that be reading, playing sports, playing an instrument, dancing, singing or just watching Netflix.

There's a very special event that takes place during every Convention called "OPSEU's Got Talent," and hopefully you were able to attend. It's a night for members to show off their passions – the things that help define them.

We continue to be surprised at the talent our members have. The music and the fashion that so many

OPSEU members demonstrated proved it has kept them fresh and alive, and brought joy to all of us who got to watch their special talents. So when you have had a bad day at work or are feeling a little down, practise your passion, and maybe next year, you can show off to all your brothers and sisters at OPSEU – and possibly win a little prize!

OPSEU's
got
Talent
5th
Annual

Smudging opens Convention 2019



OPSEU members joined the Indigenous Circle on Wednesday evening to take part in a sacred smudging ceremony. Smudging is the burning of sage, which produces a fragrant-smelling smoke used to purify the body and energy, and includes a light smoke bath of personal items and space.

Centuries old, the ceremony clears negative energy and helps purify the air in a cleansing effect. Other benefits of smudging include eradicating feelings of anger, fear, anxiety, grief and depression. The ceremony was open to all as many OPSEU members took part the experience.

The Indigenous Circle would like to welcome all OPSEU members to join them tonight for an Indigenous Sharing Circle between 7-9pm, in room 201D located in the Convention Centre. During the circle, people have a chance to share thoughts, words and experience.

As well, the Indigenous Circle will be taking part in a sunrise ceremony on Saturday, May 25 in Simcoe

Park, located directly across the street from the



Health and Safety Award

The 2019 Health and safety award went to Stuart Wilson from Local 234. Stuart is a worker at Maplehurst Correctional Complex in Milton. Stuart has worked tirelessly as an advocate for health and safety in his workplace. He has addressed many long standing safety concerns at Maplehurst. Stuart is extremely diligent and passionate when it comes to holding the employer accountable for enforcing proper procedures, like Correctional Institution cleaning policies.

Stuart has also fought to have areas of the facility that have been identified with mould and asbestos addressed and rectified

With more than 30 years of experience as a Correctional Officer, Stuart assists his members along with other staff and inmates of the facility.

Stuart accepted his award and stated his was successful only with the assistance of the other members of his locals assistance and cooperation.



OPSEU goes to the ballpark

Hundreds of enthusiastic OPSEU members helped kicked off the 2019 Convention yesterday evening with a Blue Jays vs. Boston Red Sox game.

The Sox got off to an early 2-0 lead in the fourth. Fan favourite Vladimir Gurerro Jr., the Jays' 20-year-old third baseman, made his first home run at home in the fourth inning – his fifth in eight games.

The Jays tied it up in the bottom of the 9th. They were looking good in the 10th, then the Sox's Mookie Betts belted a home run in the top of the 12th, followed by rookie Rowdy Tellez in the 12th.

The Jays kept the fight up through the extra innings, but Michael Chavis hit it home in the 13th, making the score 6-5 Red Sox.

Although the score didn't favour the home team, the OPSEU members in attendance were treated to a suspenseful, extra-inning game. With proceeds going to the true winner — the Live and Let Live Fund for HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and Ontario.



Authorized for distribution

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warren Thomas'.

Warren (Smokey) Thomas
OPSEU President

