The following is a summary of ONA’s key activities and successes since the last “The Work of the Union” update in spring 2018.
Bargaining/Labour Relations

- After 10 intense days of negotiations with the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) with little movement, along with three days of mediation, ONA headed to arbitration for a renewed contract for our 61,000 hospital members.
- During arbitration, ONA expertly argued for proper wage increases and normative improvements to benefits and premiums, and standardizing the wage grid for nurse practitioners (NPs).
- We also provided additional information about hospital funding that came to light after the arbitration hearing, which we believed needed to be considered.
- Arbitrator William Kaplan issued his award several months later, providing wage increases above what the OHA was offering; new coverage for mental health services by a psychologist, registered psychotherapist or social worker; the requirement for new grads who do not pass the NCLEX to be placed on unpaid leave and not terminated; clarification of the obligation of employers to keep workplaces free from violence, including domestic violence; and the requirement for hospitals to provide ONA with lists of vacated positions monthly.
- To provide details of the arbitration award, ONA held a special sector meeting with hospital leaders so they could take information back to their members.
- ONA received a major victory at the Ontario Court of Appeal on the issue of layoff rights, overturning the judicial review of a decision by Arbitrator Felicity Briggs, after a large urban hospital closed 11 beds on one of its units, thereby arbitrarily reducing the total hours of work available for regular part-time nurse.
- ONA continues to watch the changeover of community care access centres to Local Health Integration Networks very carefully as we are concerned they have failed to truly integrate patient care.
- It came down to the wire, but the five full-time and two casual RNs at the Central West Specialized Developmental Services in Oakville reached a settlement with their employer during conciliation.
- Litigation of the controversial vaccine-or-mask policy introduced at many Ontario hospitals is continuing with the Toronto Academic Health Sciences Network group of hospitals, which agreed to another central arbitration process and to be bound by the outcome of a lead case (St. Michael’s Hospital), and we are hopeful for a decision before the 2018 flu season.
- An arbitrator ordered full reinstatement and compensation for Bargaining Unit President Melissa Wraith following her dismissal for trying to obtain information from her employer about an attack on an ONA member at Alexandra and Marine General Hospital.
- Canadian Blood Services has been removed from the right-to-strike sector, meaning bargaining disputes will be settled at arbitration; ONA is reviewing options for group bargaining with their employers.
As one of only 17 parties granted standing in the Long-term Care (LTC) Inquiry, which was initiated in light of the tragic murders of eight vulnerable LTC residents in Woodstock and London nursing homes, ONA is participating in and monitoring all aspects of the inquiry and providing frequent updates to members and staff.

During the inquiry, testimony emerged that the employer did not share vital information about Elizabeth Wettlaufer’s performance with ONA, along with the role of for-profit nursing home owners, the failure of multiple players to listen to nurses, the urgent need for more RNs in the LTC sector, the lack of training for coroners, and budget cuts resulting in fewer coroner investigations.

It is great news for ONA members after the Healthcare of Ontario Pension Plan (HOOPP) announced that its funded status at the end of 2017 remains at a very strong 122 per cent.

The Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS) is also performing well, earning an investment return of 11.5 per cent after all expenses last year, topping the 10.3 per cent in 2016.

Thanks to ONA lobbying, members working in primary care received their second wage and/or benefit enhancement while some are now entitled to HOOPP.

ONA provided a submission to the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal for participating nursing homes to deal with the jurisdiction of the tribunal to issue an order on outstanding issues between the parties, including the Gender Neutral Comparison System (GNCS) to be applied and the disclosure of male job classes.

As ONA has finalized the GNCS with the OHA to be used to evaluate all ONA job classes and potential male job classes within the hospital sector, the next step is to develop a questionnaire that will be completed by members and to select the representative sample sites for competition of that questionnaire.

Litigation with the community care access centres (Local Health Integration Networks) stemming from ONA’s May 2014 Application to the Pay Equity Hearings Tribunal continues, with hearing dates scheduled for August and November.

ONA is currently making strategic decisions regarding next steps to ensure NPs announced by the government for long-term care are in our Bargaining Units.

Hot topics and funding in long-term care (LTC) were the focus of our most recent LTC teleconnects.

ONA launched our newest provincial campaign, RN Proud, which raises public awareness about the skills, experience, education and compassion RNs demonstrate every day in their work, while asking the provincial government to hire 10,000 RNs over the next four years to fill current vacancies in hospitals.

The multi-faceted campaign consisted of transit shelter ads featuring ONA members highlighting the role RNs play in health care, print ads, a social media campaign and a revitalized dedicated website chock full of statistics.

ONA joined forces with the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario to hold a media conference at Queen’s Park to launch Nursing Week, calling on all political parties to commit to making RN staffing a health-care priority.

We continue to support the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, whose membership includes emergency shelters for abused women and their children, housing programs and community-based women’s service organizations, with a donation of $10,000 annually for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.

In preparation for the provincial election, ONA prepared and enacted a campaign, Nurses Know, Nurses Vote, which was comprised of three weeks of phone banks in our five regions, a postcard on the three party platforms, literature for the candidates, robotexts, a mailed letter, an email blast, and social media and website postings to help members understand how the outcome of this election will impact their working con-

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ditions and their ability to provide safe, quality patient care, and encourage them to vote for health care.

With the RN share of nursing employment falling from 76.4 per cent in 2003 to 69.8 per cent in 2017 and Ontario failing to meet the international best practice ratio of 1:4 RNs for patients in hospitals, ONA President Vicki McKenna met with (then) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care Dr. Helena Jaczek and (then) Premier Kathleen Wynne to ask the government’s support for three ONA goals: ensuring the right care provided by the right care provider, protecting the safety of health-care workers, and supporting marginalized and disadvantaged women.

In the lead-up to the provincial election, McKenna also asked the same of representatives from the PC and NDP parties.

The government set up an advisory committee for health-workforce planning, and ONA is an active participant.

ONA President Vicki McKenna and First Vice-President Cathryn Hoy came out to support the Ontario Health Coalition’s (OHC) Time to Rebuild media stop outside Toronto’s Mount Sinai Hospital, where OHC Executive Director Natalie Mehra highlighted two key asks for all political parties leading up to the provincial election: an immediate and significant infusion of funding for Ontario’s hospitals, and a commitment to open 30,000 new long-term care beds as quickly as possible.

One week before the provincial election, ONA urged PC leader Doug Ford to release a fully costed platform, which received widespread media attention.

A letter to the editor, signed by a number of organizations representing more than 100,000 health professionals, including ONA, urged that Dan’s Law be passed to end a three-month waiting period for access to OHIP for Canadian residents who move or return to Ontario.

During her meeting with (then) Minister of Labour Kevin Flynn, ONA President Vicki McKenna brought forward a number of issues, including the inclusion of nurses in post-traumatic stress disorder presumptive legislation, and the health and safety of our members.

With partners the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU), the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and the Canadian Health Coalition, ONA is continuing our efforts at the federal level on four national health priorities: Adequate funding of our health-care system; a health human resources plan to hire more nurses and stop RN cuts; a national Pharmacare program; and a safe seniors’ strategy to deal with severe understaffing in long-term, community and home care.

ONA Board members joined a CFNU breakfast on Parliament Hill for MPs and health-care stakeholders, where findings of the organization’s Body Count study, which calls attention to the daily occurrence of Canadians who die or fall sick both from curable illnesses and a

“patchy” pharmaceutical insurance system that is fixable, were presented.

In a meeting with NDP Leader Andrea Horwath, ONA President Vicki McKenna explained that the biggest challenge for our members is the erosion of their work, more layoffs, vacant positions not being posted/filled, and RNs being replaced by RPNs in the hospital sector.

A continuing grant from ONA to the Stephen Lewis Foundation of $70,000 in June 2018 and $70,000 in June 2019 will assist families and communities in sub-Saharan Africa infected with and affected by HIV and AIDS.
Human Rights/Accommodation/Return to Work

- Members of ONA’s Human Rights and Equity (HRE) Team, along with Region 1 Vice-President Pam Mancuso and team project manager Sheila Riddell, joined PhD student Jacqueline Scott for a fascinating Black History Tour of Toronto, which one member called “eye-opening.”
- In keeping with the times, the Board of Directors passed a motion to replace the term “Aboriginal” in all ONA correspondence and communications with the more inclusive “Indigenous.”
- Labour Relations Officers and specialists received specific education on how staff and Bargaining Unit leaders can access the practical tools and checklists to assist them in advocating for members seeking accommodation.
- ONA’s Accommodation and Attendance Management educational modules have been extensively revised in accordance with our newly updated guides on Accommodation and Return to Work and Attendance Management.
- The first Human Rights teleconnect of 2018 – “#Me Too and Time’s Up: A Sea Change for Sexual Harassment Issues?” – walked participants through the history of these movements to identify what has changed and where things may be headed, including a summary of the law related to sexual harassment and a discussion of the resources available to our members.
- Black History Month will now be one of those key commemorative dates, with ONA material to accompany it.
- ONA’s Pride committee planned for a large ONA presence at the biggest Pride Parade in the country – Toronto Pride – and members and staff came out in droves!
- Members outside of Toronto also heed our call to join a Pride event near them, including Thunder Bay, London, Barrie, Chatham and Windsor.
- The HRE Team and Region 1 VP Pam Mancuso embark on a Black History Tour
- Members of the union summer_p05.pdf
While ONA launched the next phase of our Nurses Know campaign provincially (RN Proud), members embraced it at the Local level, engaging the public, media and key decision-makers in communities across the Ontario.

Members overwhelmingly responded to a public poll on our campaign website, which asked, Should the Ontario government make it a priority to hire 10,000 RNs over the next four years?

The poll held steady throughout the campaign, with 94 per cent in favour and more than 7,500 responses.

Many Locals are taking advantage of the $1,000 available to them each year specifically for political action work (Policy 26.11) and include that in their budget preparations.

Local 8 (Windsor) members launched a new public awareness campaign, comprised of four powerful commercials showing in cinemas and on social media and digital screens in Windsor-Essex, to highlight the serious risk of workplace violence in health care.

Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital Bargaining Unit President Jo-Dee Brown has become only the 30th RN in Ontario – and the first mental health RN – to receive a nursing designation from Toronto’s de Souza Institute, which provides continuing education in oncology and palliative care.

Members from Local 49 and their colleagues represented by OPSEU and CUPE staged a march and rally outside Arnprior and District Memorial Hospital to protest their employer’s decision to slash three full-time RNs from the inpatient unit over the past year, leaving staff shortages and devastating gaps in the nursing schedule.

Prior to the provincial election, Marshall Gowland Manor Bargaining Unit President Julie Sexton met up with NDP Leader Andrea Horwath during an election stop in Sarnia and challenged her to keep her party’s platform promise to bring change to Ontario’s long-term care system.

Local 100 (London) produced a commercial about emergency wait times, cleverly making the point that people wouldn’t wait hours for help if they were being attacked in their home or if their house was on fire.

For the third year in a row, delegates at the June Provincial Coordinators Meeting gave back to their host community, getting their hands dirty painting and doing gardening work at three women’s shelters and a Habitat for Humanity build, which was deeply appreciated.

ONA members joined a rally at Queen’s Park to relay an important message: the residents of this province deserve four hours of daily nursing and personal care in long-term care (LTC) homes as a minimum standard – something for which ONA and our allies have long lobbied.

Local 42 Coordinator Patricia O’Shaughnessy was successful in getting the Mayor of Cornwall to read a Nursing Week proclamation, which O’Shaughnessy attended along with Cornwall Community Hospital’s Vice-President of Patient Services and Chief Nursing Officer.

Bargaining Unit leaders from each region were tapped to take a lead in ONA’s provincial election phone banks in our Toronto, London, Hamilton and Ottawa offices to encourage members to vote for health care, and noted that
while they were concerned about their comfort level, they gained valuable skills and would do it again in a heartbeat.

Dozens of other members, retirees and staff volunteered to operate those phone banks, talking to our members and leading the charge.

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre emergency department charge nurse Miranda Lamb was approached by numerous media outlets – and our own Front Lines magazine! – to tell the story of how the entire hospital team came together to care for the victims of the van attack in Toronto.

Local 2 arranged for electronic billboards to be displayed in Sudbury, urging passers-by to vote for health care on June 7.

Keen to avoid a repeat of 2012, when they were forced to strike for 12 days, public health nurses working in the counties of Haldimand and Norfolk marched to the local council chamber with a megaphone to remind them that 33 members of Local 7 have been working without a contract since December 31, 2017; a settlement was reached shortly after.

To coincide with Nursing Week, Locals 81 (Lake of the Woods) and 17 (Muskoka) produced heartfelt and humorous videos highlighting the true value of RNs.

ONA launched a successful email campaign on behalf of public health nurses and NPs at Algoma Public Health, who had been without a contract since April 2017, telling the Algoma Board of Health, local councillors and MPP Ross Romano that these professionals deserved a collective agreement that is respectful of their skill, knowledge and dedication to their patients and communities.

Public Health Nurse Gaynor Quieros, who works for Niagara Region Mental Health, was named the Joan Lesmond Internationally Educated Nurse of the Year, presented by the CARE Centre in recognition of her dedication and professionalism.

Members at the Women’s College Hospital’s Family Practice Health Centre, concerned over the layoff of four full-time RNs – half the RN staff – amped up their political action activities, which included two well-attended rallies, an email campaign and a presentation of our petition to the Board.

ONA members continued to stand up for their patients and stand out from the crowd of health providers by embracing the Wear White on Wednesdays campaign.
Health and Safety/WSIB

- ONA continued to remind members to report all workplace violence incidents, which is their legal duty, so that employers are aware of all workplace hazards and can act on them and so the Ministries of Labour and Health and Long-Term Care understand how serious this issue is and fund and enforce preventive items for worker protection and patient safety.

- The second phase of the government’s Leadership Table, with working groups for hospitals, homes and community, which include ONA members and staff, commenced with ONA President Vicki McKenna representing our union on the Executive Team.

- The government indicated that many Ministry of Labour (MOL) inspectors have had violence training as a result of the 23 consensus recommendations stemming from the first phase of the Leadership Table, and we are following up.

- ONA continues to work with the College of Nurses of Ontario, the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario and the Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario to develop a Nurse Health Program for our members with mental health issues, including addictions.

- Local 124 Coordinator DJ Sanderson spoke to Front Lines about the award he received from the Workers Health & Safety Centre and Region 3 for outstanding services and dedication to improving the work environment, acknowledging that it is a team effort.

- Throughout the province, ONA members attended somber Day of Mourning events to honour those who have been killed or injured on the job, including fellow members, and call for change.

- ONA President Vicki McKenna wrote to the Minister of Labour with concerns about the impact of MOL enforcement direction on the health-care workforce, after a member refused to work with a flagged violent patient without all reasonable precautions.

- We are participating on an advisory table for the MOL-funded project, Setting Priorities: Building Capacity for Joint Health and Safety Committees, which will identify current occupational exposures in workplaces.

- ONA staff attended the annual spring Labour Forum of the Institute for Work and Health to provide input into its research agenda.

- ONA acknowledged the 15th anniversary of SARS by remembering the lives lost, including ONA members Nelia Laroza and Tecla Lin, and those who became ill and were quarantined, and continuing to push for implementation of all Justice Archie Campbell’s SARS Commission recommendations, including the adoption of the precautionary principle.

- Health and Safety Vice-Presidents from London Health Sciences Centre organized an education day, which provided Local 100 members with basic training on the Occupational Health and Safety Act, violence in the workplace, and next steps to make improvements.

- Jessica Szmiett, a crisis intervention nurse at Bluewater Health, shared her touching story of how ONA helped when her long-term disability was denied after a shocking event brought her traumatic childhood to the surface.

- ONA joined with labour and social justice organizations from across Ontario.
in recognizing Injured Workers’ Day, and standing up for those who have been injured or made ill as a result of their work.

A donation of $600 was provided by ONA to the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers’ Sudbury Clinic’s Repetitive Strain Injury Awareness Conference.

As a result of our advocacy in health and safety, a number of employers are now working with our Bargaining Unit leaders on violence programs, including the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto and The Ottawa Hospital.

ONA is working with the Public Services Health and Safety Association, in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, on the development of an Organizational Risk Assessment program framework for infectious disease threat exposure in health organizations, which will be developed first for hospitals and then adapted to other health-care organizations.

Under the theme, Violence...Are You at Risk? Who, How and When to Assess Risk, ONA’s regional spring Health and Safety Caucuses were held throughout the province to discuss workplace violence and the value of comprehensive and accurate expert risk assessments.

A webinar option for the Caucus, open to all, was also offered.

ONA has endorsed an important research project called, The Impact of Organizational Programs and Supports on the Psychological Health Outcomes of Workers Exposed to Patient Violence in Long-Term Care and Home Care Organizations.

The most recent health and safety webinar focused on “Violence Prevention: Personal Safety Response System Toolkit,” which included a discussion on the purpose of the toolkit, a legislation review, definition and descriptions.

Member Education

- ONA workshops continued to be popular, with a total of 96 full-day, 39 half-day and 20 lectureettes delivered in the first few months of 2018, and approximately 1,500 members in attendance.

- eLearning, which provides free online education to ONA members, was a favourable option, with approximately 188 program completions in the first few months of 2018 for the 25 program offerings.

- The most popular eLearning programs are Professional Responsibility Workload Report Form – Hospital Sector; Harassment, Mobbing and Bullying; Return to Work Level I: Is Your Workplace Making You Sick?; Return to Work Level II: Legislation; Professional Responsibility Workload Reporting Process: Allied Health Sector; and Workplace Safety and Insurance Act: What You Need to Know.

- ONA’s Membership Education and Events Team, in conjunction with the Information Technology Team, is investigating options for our eLearning platform that will ensure a robust environment for our adult learners into the future.

- Members continue to embrace video lectureettes, with 174 completions from January to April 2018.

- The most popular of our 14 video lectureettes include Duty to Accommodate; Understanding Conflict; ONA Professional Practice; Harassment, Mobbing and Bullying; and RN/RPN Scope of Practice and the CNO Three Factor Framework.

- ONA President Vicki McKenna launched a series of popular podcasts on hot-topic issues to add to our wide range of communications vehicles for our members, nursing students and the public.

- Concurrent education workshops at the Joint Sector Meeting focused on key labour relations topics, such as transforming long-term care, safe home care visits, winning practices to safeguard collective agreements, the duty to accommodate, and the grievance process.

- A call was issued for applications for our popular Leadership Summit and Activist Camp, to be held in Grand Bend this fall, with 30 spots available for three concurrent education streams: Advanced, Novice and Activist.

- A very well-received education session at the June Provincial Coordinators Meeting featured retired Lieutenant-Colonel Stéphane Grenier, who spoke about his undiagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder and depression after returning from a mission in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide, and the need for workplaces to foster an open, non-stigmatized approach to mental health.

Retired Lieutenant-Colonel Stéphane Grenier headlines June PCM education
Communications

- Our website received more than 462,000 page views the first few months of this year, with the most visited being our Nursing Week coverage in May and all of the bargaining updates.
- ONA’s collective agreements continue to be popular with more than 26,000 downloads.
- Other popular pages include ONA job lists, the contact ONA page, insurance and benefits, and the workshop calendar.
- ONA Facebook has more than 24,300 followers, which is more than CUPE National (23,000+), OPSEU (11,000) and SEIU Healthcare Canada (8,000+).
- One week after the launch of the RN Proud campaign, ONA Facebook gained more than 400 followers, and by the end of the second week, our campaign social media ads on Facebook were liked, shared and commented on more than 13,000 times!
- Our Twitter followers are also at an all-time high of 15,700, which makes it one of the top union Twitter sites in Canada, with users continuing to retweet information related to the work of our union.

Professional Issues

- ONA continued to make gains for our members in addressing their workload and professional practice complaints (PRCs) and have been able to reach settlements prior to having to advance to an Independent Assessment Committee (IAC).
- One such significant settlement addressed the serious workload issues of RNs at the Runnymede Healthcare Centre after the employer cut back one-half of all the RN hours with no increase in RPN hours, securing the posting of 3.5 full-time RN positions, and that the employer will ensure all RN shifts are filled on the schedule prior to being posted.
- After the Board made it their priority to secure a commitment from the government to step away from plans to consider allowing RPNs to extend their scope of practice into four key areas of the RN scope without any consultation from ONA, (then) Minister of Health and Long-Term Care sent a letter to the CNO directing it to immediately halt any consideration of an expanded scope and instead set up a thorough consultation process with key nursing organizations, including ONA.
- ONA continued to work with our Canadian Blood Services Bargaining Units as workload issues increased while donor associates screened patients, instead of more appropriate RNs.
- Members were invited to participate in a University of Toronto study into the role of professional discipline of nurses, including how they believe the process impacts professional development and conduct, as well as health-care delivery.
- Under the theme, Better care starts here, Nursing Week 2018 was a roaring success, with members throughout the province holding special events to celebrate and acknowledge their caring profession.
- ONA President Vicki McKenna provided an uplifting Nursing Week video message, thanking members for everything they do for their patients and our union.
- During their Nursing Week visits in all regions of Ontario, the Board heard some common concerns: workload issues, the serious lack of safe staffing levels, workplace violence and surge capacity problems.
- ONA welcomed news that NPs trained in palliative care are being given the authority to independently prescribe high-strength, long-acting opioids, which they could previously do only by consulting with a physician registered under the Ministry of
Health and Long-Term Care’s Palliative Care Facilitated Access Program.

- NPs also gained the authority to apply and order ultrasounds without restrictions, with the government working on the necessary changes to the Health Insurance Act and Independent Health Facilities Act to ensure that all ultrasounds NPs order, and the interpretation of those ultrasounds, are insured.

- ONA joined with our social workers in acknowledging the unique skills they bring to our health-care system during Social Work Week, under the theme, Social Workers on the Front Lines of Real Issues.

- ONA continues to struggle with the College of Nurses of Ontario’s stance on what its Find a Nurse public register should say with respect to NPs who choose not to complete the special education that will allow them to prescribe controlled substances.

- In recognition of the one-year anniversary of ONA’s impressive win to represent the health-care professionals at Sudbury’s Health Sciences North, the Bargaining Unit declared June 14 Health-care Professionals Day.

- “Overcrowding is not the New Norm” was the subject of the most recent professional practice teleconnect, which highlighted overcrowding in hospitals and the impact on patient care, along with a discussion on RN burnout.

- RNs can now complete all sections of forms used to determine eligibility for the Ontario Disability Support Program, as well as medical review forms.

- The most recent NP teleconnect provided listeners with an opportunity to hear an update on the CNO register; Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions research; the NP wage grid in hospitals; and two recent victories under the Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act.

- ONA was proud to recognize the vital role played by physiotherapists, who use their specialized, hands-on clinical skills to assess, diagnose and treat symptoms of illness, injury or disability, and improve people’s overall quality of life, during National Physiotherapy Month.

- With the provincial election on the horizon, the most recent Secretaries teleconnect walked them through “the Good, the Bad and the Necessary in the Election Process,” including the role they play, accountabilities and best practices.

The Work of the Union

Organizing

- ONA welcomed 19 new members from Extendicare Van Daele in Sault Ste. Marie after a successful certification vote.

- Over the past year, ONA has gained more than 300 new members, who wanted to receive the stellar services that our union provides.

- The Retention and Recruitment Team fielded calls from RNs and health-care professionals seeking the benefits that ONA membership offers, and additional campaigns are underway.

- We also continued to monitor the transfer of health services across the province and are filing PSLRTA applications when necessary to protect our work.
Student Affiliation

■ New Canadian Nursing Students’ Association (CNSA) Ontario Regional Director Daniela Monachino, a University of Toronto nursing student, attended her first ONA provincial meeting – the Joint Sector Meeting – to get to know our union and those who lead it.

■ At the June Provincial Coordinators Meeting, Monachino addressed an ONA provincial meeting for the first time, noting the support of ONA has been tremendously beneficial in not only helping her in her CNSA role, but moving the issues of students forward, and that our members ignite her passion for continuing in a leadership role when she graduates.

■ ONA will be working closely with Monachino during her one-year term on nursing student concerns.

■ ONA President Vicki McKenna was joined by Monachino and Caitlyn Leung, official CNSA delegate from York University, in a meeting with Ontario Chief Nursing Officer Michelle Acorn, where we identified the top barriers for nursing students, including quality and choice of placements, inconsistent and unnecessary restrictions on nursing student practice, a lack of respect and a need for better support from clinical instructors, and a lack of remuneration for the work of student nurses in clinical settings.

■ In response, the Chief Nursing Officer, who will be meeting with us again in the fall to continue these talks, committed to several items, including discussing the issue of consistent evaluation of nursing students across institutions/instructors, reviewing a consistent standard for provincial placement for nursing students, and contacting the university and college associations to discuss further strategies.

■ Monachino and Leung also accompanied Region 1 Vice-President Pam Mancuso, Region 5 Vice-President Karen Bertrand and Region 2 Vice-President Bernie Robinson, who is the ex-officio Board member of the Registered Nurses’ Foundation of Ontario, to its gala dinner, where scholarships totalling $105,000 were handed out to nursing students, RNs and RPNs furthering their studies.

■ Board members continued to participate in regular conference calls with CNSA leaders and campus delegates to learn about their issues firsthand so we can take them forward to the government and nursing stakeholders.