Bargaining Update #4

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CUASA to sign Collective Agreement....for 2010.

After two years of haggling over one article we finally have language that will allow us to sign the 2010 Collective Agreement. This article deals with how salaries are calculated when a CUASA member is promoted with a salary below the floor of their new rank.

Negotiations for the 2012 agreement had been going well. As a team we felt that we were achieving a lot with a cooperative employer bargaining team. But recently the tone of negotiations changed with the employer refusing to table any new financial offers. This is despite the fact that progress had been made on many fronts, including areas initially tabled by the employer. Unfortunately, the last few negotiation dates have proven frustrating in that the employer has begun making informal offers and then retracting them.

The employer is citing hard times and a recently changed political climate as to why they can no longer negotiate financially (salaries, benefits, sabbaticals). However, it is worth noting that other Ontario universities in similar positions (i.e., having started formal negotiations and at the table with approved budgets when the province started issuing requests) are giving their academic staff raises, increases in benefits and other improvements.

Carleton is asking us to accept a financial package that does not meet CPI. CUASA salaries are already among the lowest in the province. In addition, we also rank poorly in terms of second sabbaticals, benefits, and Professional Expense Reimbursement. The employer seems to want us to race to the bottom when it comes to salaries and benefits.

Over the next weeks we will be briefing you on the issues outstanding in our negotiations. Your bargaining team will continue to work diligently, and we will continue to inform you about the latest developments in negotiations. We are working on scheduling a general meeting to discuss bargaining and we encourage everyone to attend once the time and place are determined.