

Ratified contract will take teaching into the next millennium

BY RUTHANNE URQUHART
Algonquin Times staff

There was an air of jubilation in Woodroffe's faculty dining room Sept. 3, and it had nothing to do with the food.

Ontario Public Service Employees' Union Local 415 members met to discuss their Aug. 28 collective agreement with the Council of Regents, representing Ontario colleges.

"This is the best settlement we could have achieved," said Local 415 president Doug Brandy.

"We are very pleased with the

negotiations, and with our negotiating team."

If the agreement is ratified Sept. 24, the new contract will remain in effect until Aug. 31, 2001.

Brandy acknowledged that the spectre of a lost semester has been looming over students' heads since early summer.

"What affects students is that there'll be no strike," he said, raising his hand. "And our members will be feeling this high, positive about the year."

"People are very happy with the settlement," echoed nursing faculty member Marlaine

Finnegan. "We did not want to go on strike."

Related issues directly affecting students, such as contact hours, remain unchanged, as do workload status and job security for members.

Upon ratification, full-time members will see a salary increase of three per cent and a one-time lump-sum payment of \$600, and will move up one step in seniority.

Brandy indicated the issue of employment equity is ongoing, with both parties working to eliminate barriers, and said, "I want to make certain that we all

understand that both parties are committed to continuing to talk money."

Other changes include employees accumulating full seniority credit during periods of approved reduced workload, increases in insurance coverages, and dependant survivors maintaining insurance coverage with continuing monthly policy payments.

OPSEU negotiator Mary Ann White expressed satisfaction with the settlement.

"It's been a very, very difficult round of bargaining," she told members, "and the negotiating

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— DOUG BRANDY
Local 415 president

team wants to thank you for the strike mandate. Things would have been much more difficult without that.”

Brandy asked members to

note both OPSEU and Council of Regents officials signed a request, on the front page of the tentative agreement, that members vote to ratify.