

A Holiday Message from the President of the Nunavut Employees Union

December 2023



As we enter the last month of the year, our attention often turns to things like the changing weather, the end of school terms and the upcoming holiday season. December also offers an opportunity to ‘wrap’ things up for the year and to look back at what has happened.

2023’s biggest story was the four-and-a-half-month strike by Iqaluit Housing Authority (IHA) workers. These Nunavut Employees Union (NEU) members stood out in bitter, freezing weather and fought for fair wages, respect, and proper treatment at work. They also fought for all workers in Nunavut. This strike resulted in a fair Collective Agreement (CA) that sets a standard for all unionized housing and municipal employees.

Throughout 2023, the NEU has worked to negotiate CAs that reflect the changing world and workforce needs by including leave provisions for domestic violence and Inuit cultural pursuits, as well as the recognition of Inuit language and culture in Nunavut workplaces.

The impact of the bravery, resolve and solidarity of the IHA workers can’t be understated. Their efforts served to bring national attention to the issues facing Inuit workers in their home territory as well as shone a light on the [unacceptable use of scabs, high-cost Southern contractors and replacement workers in Nunavut](#).

Just about a month ago, at the Ninth Triennial Convention of the NEU I was re-elected as NEU President and given a new, three-year term to continue to build a stronger Union. The NEU Convention was reflective of the positive changes that have been made at the NEU since I became President in November 2021. This Convention was perhaps the most attended and diverse Convention in the NEU’s 25-year history. [Delegates from across Nunavut also elected a younger, more diverse NEU Executive to serve our members](#).

The strength of a Union always starts locally, and I look forward to 2024 and continue to build strong Locals that are community based. I look forward to working with the new Executive to achieve these goals. We will continue to get out to communities in 2024, not only to form new Locals, but to bring training, education, and engagement to members in their home communities.

As I look forward to the holiday season and 2024, I urge all members to take some time during the holidays to relax, take care of their physical and mental well-being and enjoy time with friends, family and loved ones.

If you are travelling, I would like to remind you that the NEU has discounts with Canadian North and Calm Air as well as other partners to make holiday travel a little easier and more affordable. If you have not booked your flight, call us at 867.979.4209 for the airline discount booking codes. For all other benefits, including car rentals, train travel and hotels please visit [Benefits for Members](#).

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind members that once the current school term ends, children will be outside playing during the break. Please be mindful of this when out and about in your vehicle.

Lastly, I would like to thank our members who are scheduled to work or are on stand-by during the holidays. I know it will be a busy time-of-year for those members.

Happy holidays. Be safe and be kind to each other and look forward to what the NEU will continue to do for you in 2024.

In Solidarity

Jason Rochon

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Rochon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

President – Nunavut Employees Union

