Greetings NASA members! It has been my honour to serve as your President this year. Your Executive and Staff have been working for you in a variety of areas in 2016. Here are some of the highlights of the work we have been doing on your behalf.

First of all, let us give a big welcome to our newest NASA members, the UofA Residence Assistants. The Residence Assistants voted to join NASA because they felt that joining a union was the most effective way to negotiate better terms and conditions of employment. We will be working hard in the coming months to provide them with the same vigorous representation that we strive to give all our members.

In the first half of 2016, your Bargaining Team put in many hours negotiating the new collective agreement. Digital copies of the new agreement are available on the NASA website. Many people look first to see what gains were made on the salary grid (2.5% grid increase on April 1st & 1.5% cash payment Dec 2016), but there were many non-monetary improvements as well. We made progress on equalizing some of the terms and conditions between Operating and Trust and moving articles into the Common Provisions. We also achieved a change to vacation entitlements for Auxiliary Salary employees, so that their vacation entitlements will be based on their service starting in year 2 of the contract. There were many more changes and I encourage every member to look through your collective agreement.

We have a possible wage reopener in 2017 and a definite wage and benefits reopener in 2018. This means that only those sections of the Collective Agreement will be open at those times. In preparation for those coming negotiations NASA has, with administration, jointly hired outside consultants to review our drug plan. We will also be looking at other elements of the benefits provided to NASA employees. We have heard very clearly from members that protecting the benefit plans is a high priority, and we will be conducting more member surveys before sitting down at the table again.

We were very happy at the success of NASA’s campaign asking the provincial government to bring back a Dental Fee Guide. Reigning in dental costs will definitely help us in bargaining. Read more in this issue of In The Community.

Your Executive has been developing NASA’s visibility on campus. This includes both participating in campus-wide events and hosting events. We

(Continued on page 2)
were proud of the response to our memorial on December 6 for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. It included participation from the Board of Governors, administration, AASUA, SU, GSA, PDFA, and the Department of Women & Gender Studies. In addition to the roses placed for the women killed in 1989 in Montreal, there was a rose laid in remembrance of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and one for all the other victims of violence against women. It is wonderful to see the University community come together around such important issues.

We expect that the coming year will keep us just as busy. In February, our Finance Committee will make its report to the membership on the dues review. This involves many important elements for our union going forward. We are currently seeing AUPE members being locked out in Cold Lake despite the important work they are doing caring for seniors. This sends us the message that even when the union is fully willing to continue negotiating at the table, employers can exert pressure by locking out their workers. We do not want to end up in a future where such an action could break our union. We will continue to take reasonable preparations to ensure we are seen as equal participants in bargaining while educating our members on the implications of bargaining with a strike/lockout system of resolution.

In the new year, we will be looking for more ways to make improvements for NASA members. For example, AASUA is interested in working together on the issue of childcare on campus. This is an issue that impacts many of our members and the waiting lists for childcare spaces on campus are very long. We hope that by working with other campus associations we can have a positive impact on improving this situation.

I will be continuing having worksite meetings with members around campus. Sitting down with small groups of NASA members is what keeps us aware of the priorities and challenges faced by different groups of workers. It is important that NASA’s priorities are reflective of the issues and priorities of our grassroots members. Any member can request a worksite visit for any size of group. I am happy to have the opportunity to give updates on NASA’s projects and receive feedback from members.

I am sure that there will be many more things that arise over the course of the year. We are fortunate that so many NASA members have stepped up to volunteer as Executive members, committee members, stewards, and event volunteers. Many thanks for all the work that they do. In addition, thanks to the NASA staff. Our Labour Relations Officers take calls from NASA members every day and work hard to provide strong representation. Our communications and administrative staff keep the office running and members informed about NASA activities.

I know everyone at the UofA is looking forward to Winter Closure when we can take a well-deserved break. I hope that everyone comes back in January rested and refreshed, ready to face the challenges of a bright new year.

### NASA Dental Fee Campaign a Success

**Deborah Stewart, NASA Communications Officer**

Last week, Health Minister Sarah Hoffman announced that the Government will be bringing back a dental fee guide for Alberta. This is great news for all Albertans.

As you may recall, NASA launched a campaign in the summer that asked the provincial government to bring back a much needed dental fee guide. The campaign included a petition calling on the government to reinstate a guide. Alberta is the only province in Canada without a dental fee guide and has been without one since 1997. Since that time, dental costs have risen faster than the rate of inflation. The costs of dental care in Alberta are between 10 – 44% higher than in other provinces.
NASA Dental Fee Campaign a Success

(Continued from page 2)

NASA President Elizabeth Johannson, Vice-President Quinn Benders and Director of Operations Nancy Furlong met with Minister Hoffman in October to present the petition that NASA members and other members of the University community signed during the campaign. We are pleased to say that the government listened to us and the announcement of the reinstatement of the dental fee guide was made on December 8, 2016.

This is a major win for NASA members as dental costs are a large portion of the benefits plan. It is also a major win for all Albertans, especially those on fixed incomes or without a dental plan.

Unions have always played a much broader role in society than people realize and this win is just another example of what happens when unions fight for a cause or to change existing legislation. The bar is raised for everyone and society as a whole benefits. This is true for other things such as minimum wages, maternity/parental leave, and workplace safety to name a few. Unions continue to play a pivotal role in working toward a fair and equitable society. NASA is proudly a part of that tradition. *Unions do make us stronger!*

NASA Year in Review
NASA Executive Board

Elizabeth Johannson, President (2016 – 2018)
Quinn Benders, Vice-President (2015 – 2017)
Elizabeth Adolf, Secretary (2016 – 2018)
Lindsay Baranowski, Treasurer (2016 – 2018)
Lilian Campbell, Bylaws Chair (2015 – 2017)
Donna Coombs-Montrose, Membership Chair (2015 – 2017)
Markian Hlynka, Grievance Chair (2016 – 2018)
Kim Koch, Human Resources Committee Chair (2016 – 2017)
Scott Harris, Political Action & Member Education Chair (2016 – 2018)

Winter Closure

The NASA Office will be closed from noon on December 23rd until 8:30 am on January 3rd.

For emergency calls only, call 780-989-6178.

Please note—all other messages will not be retrieved during the closure.