Ways To Get Involved With NASA

Brendan Van Alstine, NASA Communications Administrator

Getting involved with NASA (or any union, for that matter) might seem like a daunting task, but it really doesn’t have to be. Getting involved can be as simple as just signing the membership form and becoming a card-carrying member. Members are able to vote on things like Executive elections and on the ratification of the Collective Agreement, provide input and feedback on the direction of the union, and are also kept up to date about NASA’s current activities and campaigns. They also get access to special events, special member discounts and more! But for those who’ve already signed up, and are looking to take that next step, there are many ways to get more involved.

♦ **Attend an event or meeting**: Getting involved doesn’t have to mean making a big commitment. NASA holds regular meetings, and puts on a few different events every year including NASA’s Waterpark events, popcorn days, Celebrate the Season and our annual Pancake Breakfast. Just showing up to one of our events is a great way to get to know your fellow members, as well as NASA’s staff and volunteers and to hear about what’s happening with NASA.

♦ **Volunteer for an event**: For those keen to help, but who are perhaps a bit unsure of where to start or wary of signing up for an ongoing commitment, helping at one of NASA’s events is a great way to test the waters –the annual NASA Breakfast in particular, taking place this month on Wednesday July 18, simply could not happen without the more than four dozen NASA members who come out to volunteer each year.

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- **Participate in political action campaign** - Recent campaigns that members have contributed to include collecting signatures and successfully petitioning the provincial government to re-instate a Dental Fee Guide, and our yet-to-be successful campaign of lobbying the Government to move non-academic post-secondary staff from the Public Service Employee Relations Act (PSERA) to the new and improved labour code, where NASA encouraged our members to lobby their MLAs for the change.

- **Be a point of contact** - Perhaps you’re not quite ready to take on an official role, but you want to make sure that your co-workers and colleagues are kept in the know. Being a point of contact simply means telling your co-workers about what’s happening with NASA, encouraging them to sign up as members, maybe helping to organize a meeting at your worksite, and occasionally giving NASA a heads up when potential issues might be arising.

- **Invite us to your worksite** - There need not be trouble a-brewin’ for NASA to come out and visit you and your co-workers. The University is a big, diverse place – there are many different jobs and workplaces on campus, and we are keen to get out and learn more about the work that our members do. Worksite meetings are usually casual with no set agenda, and provide an opportunity for members to hear about what’s happening with NASA, and for NASA to hear directly from members about the issues affecting them. If you’re interested in setting up a meeting and having NASA’s President come out to your worksite just email nasa@ualberta.ca to get the ball rolling.

- **Join a committee** - For those interested in more than just one-off opportunities and who want to influence the direction of the union, NASA’s committees represent a great opportunity. The level of time commitment varies with each committee and their mandate, with some such as Membership Services (which helps to plan all of our great member events) meeting more frequently, and others meeting on a less frequent, as-needed basis. You can learn more about NASA’s committees and their mandates at https://www.nasa.ualberta.ca/committees.

- **Become a steward** - Stewards are NASA’s representatives on the proverbial “shop floor” – they are the first point of contact for many members. A steward’s most important job is to attempt to resolve issues and concerns at the lowest possible level in the workplace. On a daily basis, stewards come in contact with many different people – other members, supervisors, management, students, members of the general public, etc, and acts as an ambassador for the Union. A steward is never alone and always has the ability to contact their LRO to discuss issues and concerns and receive advice and/or mentorship. You can learn more about becoming a steward on the NASA website—https://www.nasa.ualberta.ca/steward-recruitment.

- **Run for the Executive** - The NASA Executive Board has full control and management of the affairs of the Union and currently meets twice a month. The Executive Board is responsible to conduct NASA business according to the bylaws and the intentions of the membership, and they report on their activities through the Annual Report and at each Annual General Meeting. Executive Officers of NASA are elected annually by electronic ballot. The term of office for each position is two years, with five of these positions being filled in even years and four are filled in odd years. For more about the Executive and their portfolios you can visit https://www.nasa.ualberta.ca/executive.
Join Us For The NASA Breakfast—July 18, 2018

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Join us on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 as NASA will once again be hosting our annual pancake breakfast in the main Quad. The event runs—rain or shine—from 6:30am until 11am. Cost of the breakfast is $4 or free to NASA members who bring their NASA membership card. As in previous breakfasts, we will be serving pancakes, ham (or veggie sausage for vegetarians), fruit, juice, coffee and tea. This year’s breakfast will also help to mark NASA’s 40th anniversary year and will include some special additions, including a trivia wheel game and a photo booth.

Want to help? It’s still not too late to volunteer for the breakfast. We have a number of shifts available including working the grills, serving, and clean up. If you are able to help out, please contact Nicholas at the NASA Office at 780-439-3181 or email nternes@ualberta.ca.

New Initiative for Career-Minded Moms

Brendan Van Alstine, NASA Communications Administrator

Are you a career-driven or expectant mom? A new initiative in Edmonton is aiming to connect working and career-minded mothers before, during and after maternity leave. Founded in 2017 by Kinia Romanowska in response to hearing from moms that said that they miss the intellectual discussions their work provided while on maternity leave, and facilitated by NASA member Julia Kurzawa, Pros&Babes aims to provide a forum for meaningful discussion, networking and support for moms who love their families, but also value their careers. Pros&Babes provides a space for moms to meet and share their experiences with other like-minded mothers, and to discuss the challenges of maternity leave, work-life balance and how to grow their career while also being a parent. They also advocate for more flexibility in the workplace. Pros&Babes offers a variety of workshops and programs, with their next series of sessions, Professionals on Maternity Leave: Connect, Learn, Grow, scheduled to begin August 16.

But what about dads you might ask? The organization is also currently trying to garner interest from, and build a community of dads who are interested in taking parental leave, are on parental leave or are part of a family in which both parents have demanding careers, and have started the Hops&Pops mailing list with the hope of putting together workshops and programs for dads some time in the future if interest exists.

For more information visit prosandbabes.com
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