

# Annual Report 2009-2010

BCIT **FSA**

British Columbia Institute of Technology  
**Faculty & Staff Association**

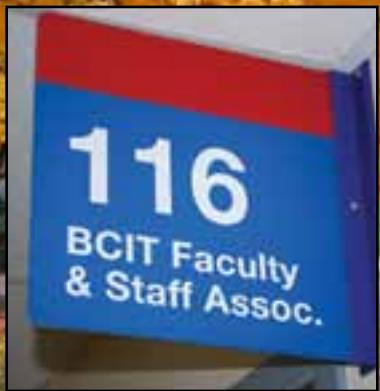
[bcitfsa.ca](http://bcitfsa.ca)

## Mission Statement

The Faculty and Staff Association defends and advances the employment interests of its members through representation, collective bargaining and advocacy with BCIT, the government and the community. We are committed to:

- Fostering high standards of excellence in education;
- Improving members' employment conditions, working environment and opportunities;
- Maintaining transparency in FSA activities;
- Fostering a well-informed and engaged membership; and
- Promoting participation in decision-making, team-building, and nurturing a sense of community amongst its members and all of BCIT.

## Contact Us



### British Columbia Institute of Technology Faculty and Staff Association

SE16-116  
3700 Willingdon Avenue  
Burnaby, British Columbia  
Canada V5G 3H2

email: [fsa@bcit.ca](mailto:fsa@bcit.ca)  
telephone: 604.432.8695  
fax: 604.432.8348

[www.bcitfsa.ca](http://www.bcitfsa.ca)

## FSA Office Staff

Paul Reniers, Executive Director

Heather Neun , Senior Labour Relations Representative  
Christine Nagy, Labour Relations Representative  
Ian Stockdale, Labour Relations Representative

Eileen Chaban, Financial Administrator  
Marian Ciccone, Office Assistant  
Paul Dayson, Communications Officer

## Message from Your President and Executive Director

### Our Vision. Our Work. Our Community.

The representation, negotiation and advocacy work of the FSA Executive and Staff produced many things to celebrate in the last academic year. As we conclude our 2007-10 FSA Strategic Plan, we can take pride in the accomplishments that have been built on the planning begun three years ago.

One of the things we can be most proud of is the fruition of BCIT's visioning exercise. The FSA convened BCIT's first Vision Committee in June 2007. This group of FSA members created the momentum that resulted in the Institute embarking on the path to developing its Strategic Plan. Looking back, the work of our committee helped change the course of BCIT. We now have a vision, a mission and a Strategic Plan that the community created.

The layoffs resulting from BCIT's 2009-10 fiscal plan took a heavy toll on the many members and departments affected by them. Because of the work begun back in 2007, we were much better positioned to be involved in the process from the outset than we had been three years ago. Our language provides several safeguards for members facing potential job loss and some of these provisions were tested for the first time this year. Our oversight of the process from its outset helped smooth a difficult path. While this generated a tremendous amount of work for the FSA Labour Relations Reps who tirelessly ensured our collective agreement rights were upheld, for the most part the process was smoother and produced more satisfying results than similar reductions in the recent past.

The FSA continues to maintain a service standard for the membership that is second to none in the sector. Having participated in the common table negotiations this round, we have gained some valuable insight and understanding into the labour relations work of the sector. Having Labour Relations Representatives on staff and on campus that are available to answer our questions is something to be very thankful for. Our LR reps focus solely on the FSA collective agreement issues and on working with the Executive and membership to forward the interests of our Association. This focus and dedication to upholding our rights and working together to find common ground has served us well in building a strong relationship with BCIT.

The FSA has continued to work toward improving our practice of consulting with members. Through the Fall of 2009 to Spring of 2010, we hosted several bargaining forums. The forums provided a unique opportunity for members from across the institution to come together and provide advice and direction on issues ranging from workload to compensation to classification and beyond. The sharing of ideas has resulted in a strong proposal package we are proud to be presenting to BCIT knowing that it represents solutions you feel resolve the issues you face in your workplace. Because of the participation of so many members, we feel we have developed better proposals than ever.





With the completion of the Implementation Plan and the identification of individuals accountable to lead each of the initiatives, BCIT is well on its way to becoming a performance based organization. This path is new to all of us and there will be some challenges along the way. While we all get used to this level of accountability and transparency, I ask that you lend your valuable time to assist those who are responsible for getting us there. Our Collective Agreement requires meaningful consultation prior to decisions being taken and our responsibility doesn't end there. This path requires each of us to find ways to get involved to lend our expertise, knowledge and ideas to ensure the institution achieves its goals into the future. Together, the FSA and you, our members, individually can make our BCIT a better place for our students, ourselves, and our province.

Amy Fell  
Paul Reniers

## Message from Your Labour Relations Representatives

The FSA reps have been occupied with representing members/departments during the recent round of layoffs, beginning in the fall of 2009 and continuing into 2010. This has been a challenging period, as our reps attempted to closely monitor the Institute's actions for compliance with the Collective Agreement and basic fairness principles, as well as supporting members affected by this difficult process.

Your reps perform a range of duties in representing individual members, specific groups of members (such as PTS Instructors and Temporary Employees), as well as the interests of the membership as a whole. The types of issues dealt with by FSA staff are extensive and the following reflects the range of concerns that have arisen during the year:

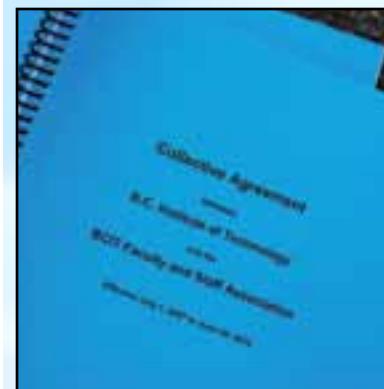
- protecting the FSA's exclusive authority to bargain with the Employer
- taking proactive measures to adequately safeguard the members' safety and well-being
- ensuring that seniority and employment protections are adequately and fairly implemented
- monitoring for fair selection processes
- ensuring that members receive full compensation, in the form of administrative allowances, pensions, benefit plans and proper salary placement
- enforcing the FSA's jurisdiction as a bargaining unit
- promoting adherence to the regularization provisions and the proper use of yellow contracts
- monitoring the hours of work and workload provisions
- responding to concerns about members' working conditions
- addressing human rights concerns and fostering a climate of non-discrimination and tolerance

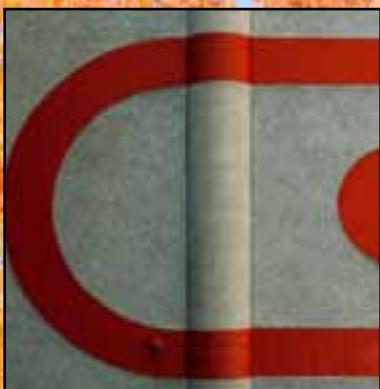
Between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010, we can report the following statistics:

- 150 issue and grievance files opened
- 96 files resolved
- ongoing attendance to daily visits, emails and phone inquiries by members
- attendance as union observers at selection committee meetings as well as management selection committees, to ensure compliance with member rights
- 92 contracting-out requests reviewed for the FSA bargaining unit
- 55 student employee requests reviewed
- 47 memoranda of agreement negotiated with BCIT
- negotiated agreeable resolutions to 12 layoffs

A final major accomplishment over the last twelve months was the recent decision of the B.C. Labour Relations Board, wherein the FSA's application was granted and the Institute was directed to commence bargaining.

*Heather Neun  
Ian Stockdale  
Christine Nagy*





## The 2007-2010 FSA Strategic Plan Setting High Expectations of Ourselves

Following the 2007 round of bargaining, the FSA Executive Committee set about to develop a systematic and long-term approach to improving the working conditions of the membership. The FSA's 2007-10 Strategic Plan set high expectations for the Association. Executive champions, continuous review, and a bi-annual evaluation of progress have helped to make the plan an effective tool, and touchstone, for action. The implementation of its strategies has put the FSA in a stronger position to represent, negotiate, and advocate for our members. While some goals are still works in progress, others have been more successful than we might have hoped in 2007.

### BCIT's Vision, Consultation and Labour-Management Relations

From the outset of the strategic plan, we challenged BCIT's senior management group to listen to our members' concerns and ideas and to involve faculty and staff in a meaningful way in getting the Institute back on track. We called for a renewal of the collaborative partnership between management and our members that had served BCIT so well for most of its 40-year history.

The strategic and fiscal planning processes conducted during the past two years have provided greater transparency and more significant opportunities for member input than any BCIT planning process in recent memory. As well, BCIT has opened up other venues for consultation over the past two years, creating opportunities for our members to help set the direction for BCIT by sitting on committees, researching issues, writing position papers, participating in focus groups and sharing their views with FSA representatives.

- The FSA's Institute Vision Analysis Committee produced its own position paper and worked closely with John English, the Dean of the Education Vision Initiative, and President Don Wright on the visioning exercise that resulted in BCIT's Strategic Plan -- a document created by our community.
- The FSA was consulted throughout the 2009-10 Fiscal Planning process making it smoother than in the past and providing time for affected departments to check numbers and make their own proposals – resulting in reduced layoffs for individual members.
- On research at BCIT, the FSA has been a leader, organizing the Summit on Research and its report. This event focused the discussion on the role applied research plays at BCIT and led the Institute to form a standing committee on research.

In turn, we have also extended a hand to BCIT's senior management, regularly inviting them to address FSA meetings -- giving them and our members the opportunity to directly ask questions and share information. Labour-management meetings at the school-level have also created opportunities to share information, creating better understanding and implementation of the Collective Agreement.

BCIT continues to involve us as a stakeholder, inviting our representation on the planned Leadership Task Force in this coming year. The FSA strongly supports this consultative approach to addressing issues at BCIT and our growing culture of dialogue.

### Member Attachment

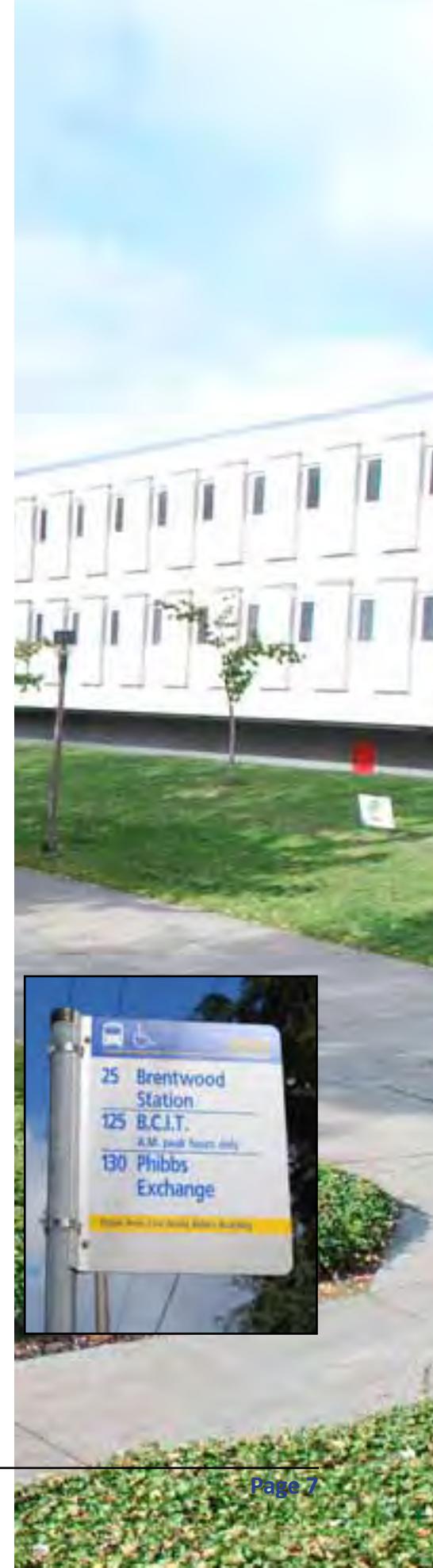
In the past year, over 150 members contributed to the work of the FSA by representing their colleagues as Directors, Tech Reps, members of departmental and managerial selection committees, the various Professional Development committees, internal FSA committees, and on Institute task forces and projects. While we don't track a total number of participants, estimates suggest an increase of up to 50 percent in the past two years. These members include a number of new Tech Reps and newly represented departments. Many other members have made valuable contributions at FSA meetings, in forums on issues such as bargaining, BCIT's fiscal plan, and research, or through emails, phone calls or one-on-one interactions.

In part this may be a result of the new openness at BCIT, but we continue to strive to make members' involvement easier. Membership consultation in preparation for the current round of bargaining was unprecedented, beginning earlier and reaching more members than our highly successful consultations in 2007. We also have reached out utilizing our website, email lists, publications, forums and meetings to provide members with timely, relevant information, communicating our successes and the challenges as an organization and soliciting members' feedback. Other steps have been small, like specific efforts to reach PTS members and reimbursing Tech Reps from satellite campuses for parking and mileage costs when attending Tech Rep meetings. While we are making small but steady improvements in reaching PTS members, about 25% of our regular and temporary members have participated in FSA events and 50% responded to our bargaining survey. Those are great numbers for an organization of our size and we're committed to making them even better.

### Changing Enrolment and Student Needs

Our Directors have been involved in a complete review of BCIT's application and enrolment processes at the Institute's Application Review Committee. This has provided access to enrolment data and analysis, as well as the means to advocate for members' interests. One result has been a "rapid response team" to aid struggling programs and departments before enrolment becomes an issue. FSA involvement has also extended to participation in discussions of BCIT's enrolment efforts through participation on BCIT's Strategic Enrolment Management Council.

*Continued on next page*





*Continued from previous page*

## The Struggle for Workload Recognition

Members' workloads continue to be a major area of concern. The collective agreement's move away from departmental-wide contact hour averages to individual averages over two years was a major shift in how instructional workloads are treated. This change caused a number of workloading headaches in several areas. Overall, however, individual workload issues have declined. Some of the causes of workload issues in specific departments are better identified, but the remedies are sometimes as complex and challenging as the problem. In 2007, we hoped our approach to the problem would create data about workload issues. However very few workload plans to address overloading have been produced.

The FSA has responded to requests from members and departments to hold the line on workloads and to increase management accountability for unsustainable workloads. Our LR Representatives have had success intervening early in the workload process in some departments with education and advocacy. Workload, nonetheless, remains an Institute-wide concern.

Members have encountered a few situations where the 15-contact hour a week average has resulted in increased workload. Using contact hours on their own ignores drivers of workload such as administrative and non-instructional responsibilities, the number of students enrolled in a course and the nature of the instruction being delivered. As a result, our first Instructional Workload Dispute Committee has been formed to address such workload issues in the Communications department. While the process has been slow and frustrating, we hope the result will be a better understanding of how conditions other than contact hours need to be addressed.



## Protecting and Promoting the Collegial Model

To provide education to members on the Collegial Model and how it is supposed to work under the collective agreement, the FSA formed a Department Rights and Responsibilities Committee. This committee has engaged in education of Tech Reps on our methods of collegial decision making and aided our reps in providing assistance and support to departments struggling with this process – mostly in relation to workload and hiring issues.

Collegial Model issues were frequently raised during the various forums held by the FSA over the last year in preparation for bargaining. Due to the diversity of departmental governance methods, a best practices model that can be universally applied remains difficult to isolate. Opportunities for improvement, however, have been created through the sharing of departmental practices at Tech Rep meetings.

## Improving compensation

Through education and enforcement, our LR staff has worked to see that members receive the full benefits of their collective agreement. Working with members, programs, departments and schools, they have advocated for us on a vast range of issues. Negative impacts of contracting out have been addressed. The Institute's ability to hold up PD expense claims has been curbed. The impact of the Canada Revenue Agency decision to tax employee parking was lessened. As well, they have fought the erosion of job security through resisting the conversion of regular positions to temporary and auxiliary contracts. We've also achieved success in advocating for regularization.

However, as we are all aware, our pay and benefits are lagging compared with the private sector, resulting in recruitment problems. Even pension plan benefits are eroding and, in some professions, industry is competing with us on vacation and hours of work, negating the benefits of lifestyle and security. To examine retention issues, we have also been developing a system for exit interviews for FSA members that we hope to implement in the coming year.

The FSA has focused on initial salary placement as a means to improve compensation between bargaining. In 2008, the FSA agreed with BCIT to remove caps on salary step placement on condition that it apply to all departments facing recruitment challenges and that all instructors with similar qualifications be raised to the same step as new faculty. Specific department agreements were reached in several different areas ranging from health and engineering to research.

Leading into bargaining, the FSA has been working to strengthen our position at the table. In addition to compiling a vast range of data on compensation and hearing the concerns of members through our forums, we have also improved our relations with the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators and the BCGEU. The FSA was determined to have a voice in this round of compensation bargaining and we achieved favourable terms for participating in the Provincial Bargaining Council. We are not required to sign the provincial master agreement or follow FPSE or the GEU in job action and we have an independent voice on the provincial negotiating committee. Indeed, with our size and our professional staff support, we are a very strong presence on the council.

The work begun in 2007 to position ourselves for this round of bargaining has proven to be imperative. We are facing a strong provincial mandate to hold the line on compensation at a time when poor compensation is undermining our educational programs.



**2009-2010****Highlights of Your Association's Activities****Layoffs and the BCIT Fiscal Plan**

The BCIT Fiscal Planning process this year was grueling for the FSA, its members and our LR Representatives. Members contributed numerous ideas on how to mitigate the impact of the required cuts which the FSA ensured the Institute heard. The FSA's LR staff worked tirelessly to ensure that our collective agreement rights were upheld protecting both members and their departments.

**Bargaining Forums: Consulting Members on Their Priorities**

The year saw what may have been the most comprehensive set of consultations in FSA history in preparation for bargaining. We conducted a general bargaining forum in September followed by a series of topic-based forums throughout the fall term. Starting in January, we held additional forums for members including events for PTS instructors, a number of departments and specific job classifications. Notes from these sessions were brought together for the Collective Agreement Committee, along with hundreds of specific suggestions made through individual conversations and data from our online bargaining survey, to formulate our bargaining proposals and priorities.

**Representing Our Interests at the Provincial Table**

The FSA was determined to have a voice in this round of compensation bargaining at the sector table. We negotiated an agreement to join the Provincial Bargaining Council alongside the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators and the BCGEU. The agreement ensures us a voice in deciding compensation whether at the provincial table or the local table while allowing us to retain our independence of action.

**A Smoother PD Expense Process**

Guidelines, and a dispute process, for members applying for their Professional Development Expense Funds were agreed to with the Institute. Although we did not entirely remove oversight of the Finance Department from the process, we improved the likelihood that claims will be approved and reduced the risk of undue delay.

**Tech Rep Meetings: Listening to Members' Feedback**

The monthly meeting of the FSA's Tech Reps continued to be a useful conduit for members' feedback and concerns on BCIT-wide issues and a venue for cross-department discussion of members' needs. It is also a forum for the continuing education of the Tech Reps in their role as the FSA's departmental representatives. A great example of this was the session comparing selection processes in different departments.



## FSA Finances 2009-2010

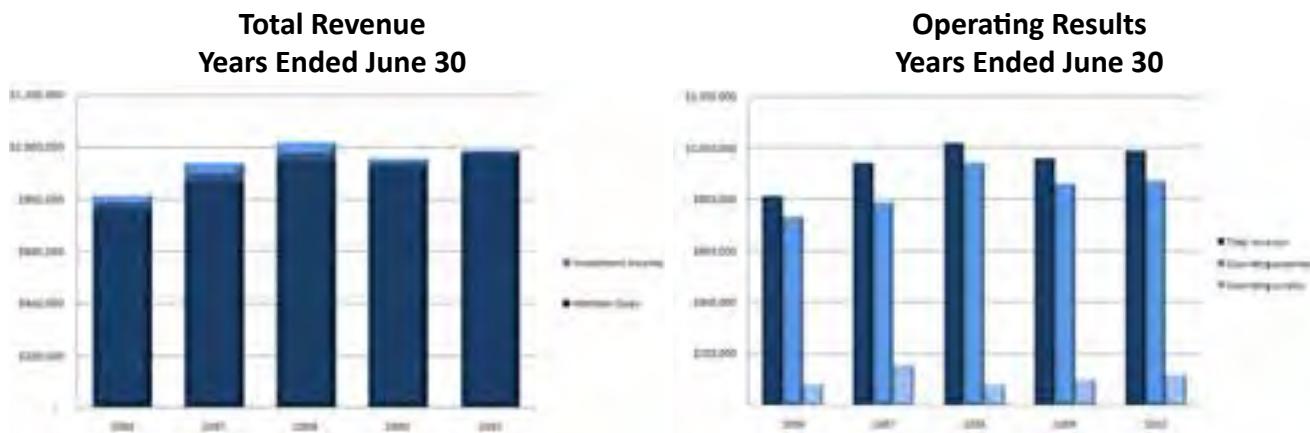
The FSA finished the 2009-10 fiscal year in a very strong financial position with net assets (assets in excess of liabilities) of \$1.96 million at June 30, 2010. During the year, the FSA experienced a 5.4 % increase in membership dues revenue due to an increase in the number of FSA members employed during the period. Investment income dropped by 76% due to significant declines in market interest rates.

The FSA reported its fifth consecutive annual operating surplus and was able to increase its strike fund by \$112 thousand, nearly meeting its strike fund target of \$1.5 million.

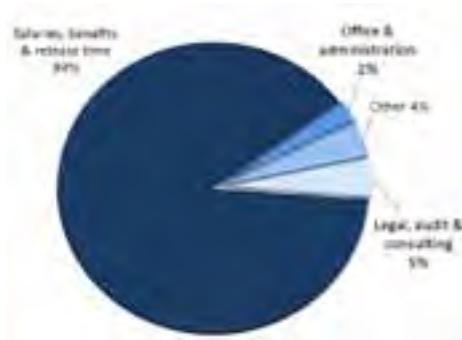
Other financial highlights for 2009-10:

- Maintained a membership dues rate of 1.35% of gross wages for the fifth consecutive year. This rate continues to be the lowest in the sector.
- Operating expenses were 1.2 % higher than in the previous year, due mainly to an increase in salaries and benefits.
- Strike fund balance at June 30, 2010: \$1.498 million.

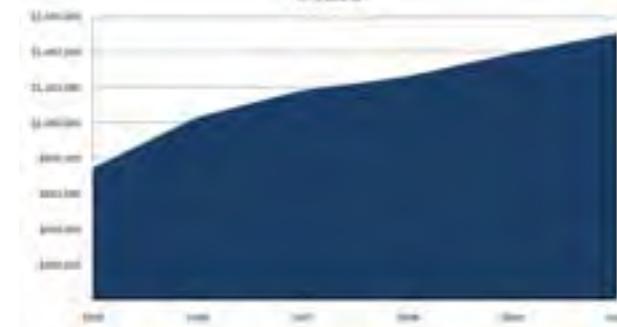
	<b>Member Dues</b>	<b>Investment Income</b>	<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>Operating expenses</b>	<b>Operating surplus</b>
2006	\$762,936	\$47,976	\$810,912	\$731,121	\$79,791
2007	\$868,637	\$68,534	\$937,171	\$786,711	\$150,460
2008	\$945,640	\$69,936	\$1,015,576	\$938,087	\$77,489
2009	\$922,078	\$33,120	\$955,198	\$860,275	\$94,923
2010	\$974,577	\$8,085	\$982,662	\$870,447	\$112,215



<b>Operating Expenses Year Ended June 30, 2009</b>		
Legal, audit & consulting	\$36,377	2005
Salaries, benefits & release time	\$773,410	2006
Office & administration	\$21,663	2007
Other	\$35,997	2008
	\$870,447	2009
		2010



<b>Strike Fund At June 30</b>	
2005	\$743,573
2006	\$1,029,464
2007	\$1,179,924
2008	\$1,257,413
2009	\$1,386,089
2010	\$1,498,304





## The FSA Executive Committee

### Current (2010--2011)

Amy Fell, President  
Terry Gordon, Vice-President  
Teresa Place, Treasurer  
Joe Boyd, Director-at-Large  
Neil Cox, Director-at-Large  
Steve Finn, Director-at-Large  
Colin Jones, Director-at-Large  
Taco Niet, Director-at-Large  
Silvia Raschke, Director-at-Large

### Past (2009-2010)

Amy Fell, President  
Terry Gordon, Vice-President  
Teresa Place, Treasurer  
Joe Boyd, Director-at-Large  
Neil Cox, Director-at-Large  
Steve Finn, Director-at-Large  
Colin Jones, Director-at-Large  
Taco Niet, Director-at-Large  
Silvia Raschke, Director-at-Large

**Thanks to Former Executive Members:**  
Randal Singer, Director-at-Large

**Representation. Negotiation. Advocacy.**

