

2014 Lorimer Award

CITATION FOR SHEILA MCKEE-PROTOPAPAS

The logo for OCUFA, consisting of the letters 'OCUFA' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The 'O' and 'C' are a darker blue, while the 'U', 'F', and 'A' are a lighter blue.

Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario



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CITATION FOR SHEILA MCKEE PROTOPAPAS WINNER OF THE 2014 LORIMER AWARD

There are many reasons why Sheila McKee-Protopapas, Executive Director of the Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty Association (WLUFAs), is a deserving recipient of a Lorimer Award. But perhaps all of those reasons are captured in a quote by one of her nominators:

She is, quite simply, the union representative I would like to be.

What does it mean when someone makes a statement like that? It means that Sheila is both a leader and a mentor, showing WLUFAs the way forward while showing her colleagues what leadership looks like. It means that, as the lead negotiator for WLUFAs, she brings energy, creativity, and dedication to a very difficult job. Sheila's nominators note that she leads with both her heart and her head, and achieves "wins" for her members "with style, and on her own terms." It means that she is an individual to be emulated, to be sure.

Sheila's nominators note the particular skill and sensitivity she brings to negotiating on behalf of the contract academic staff at Laurier. The treatment of contract faculty is an urgent issue facing faculty associations in Ontario, and many struggle with the unique challenges of advocating on behalf of this group. Sheila again provides an example of how faculty associations can work harder and work better on behalf of contract faculty on their campus and across the province.

Doug and Joyce Lorimer – for whom this award is named – are synonymous with bargaining at Laurier. Sheila had big shoes to fill when she succeeded Doug on the WLUFAs bargaining team. The fact that she has not only filled these shoes but made them her own makes her a natural choice for the Lorimer Award. Her ongoing and glowing example to faculty leaders across Ontario makes her an exceptional one.