

Name:

CHRIS GRAHAM

Title:

Executive Vice-President (EVP), Society of United Professionals, IFPTE Local 160

Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO),
Communications Advisor, Corporate Relations,
Stakeholder Engagement and Innovation**Education:**

- University of Western Ontario - Bachelor of Science (Biology/Genetics), 1997

Continuing Education:

- Canadian Labour Congress – Parliamentary Procedure and Public Speaking Certificate Course, July 2024
- Labour College of Canada Graduate (Cohort 9), July 2023
- safeTALK – Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training, April 2023
- Ontario Shores – Mental Health First Aid Certificate Course, April 2022
- Ontario Shores – Mental Health in the Workplace Training, November 2020
- Labour Community Services, YES: It Matters! Ending Systemic Racism Committee, October 2020 to Present
- Conference Board of Canada – Online seminars/resources and online self-study, March 2020 to Present
- Toronto Metropolitan University (the dais) – Online seminars/resources and online self-study, March 2020 to Present
- Canadian Association of Work and Labour Studies Congress and Symposium, June 2019
- Canadian Labour Congress – Member Engagement – Member Action Certificate Course, March 2017
- Toronto and York Region Labour Council – John Cartwright Leadership Institute Graduate, March 2017
- WSIB-Certified Inspector, Workers' Health and Safety Centre, May 2009 to Present

Society Involvement - Delegate/Unit Director/Executive-Principal Officer:

- Executive Vice-President, December 2018 to Present
- Local Vice-President at IESO, January 2016 to December 2018
- Unit Director at IESO (Clarkson System Control Centre/UMR), April 2015 to January 2016
- Delegate at IESO, May 2009 to April 2015

Committee Membership:

- Society Executive Board, 2015 to Present
- Society Executive Committee of the Executive Board, April 2018 to Present
- Society Education Committee, 2013 to Present (Committee Chair, 2018 to Present)
- Society Coordinated Collective Bargaining Committee, 2015 to Present (Committee Chair, 2018 to Present)
- Society Grievance Review Committee Chair, 2020 to Present (Committee Chair, 2018 to Present)
- Society Policy Committee, 2015 to December 2018
- Society Pension Committee, 2015 to December 2018
- Society Grievance Appeal Panel, January 2016 to December 2018
- Society Bargaining Committee at IESO, 2014 to 2019 (Lead Negotiator, January 2016 to December 2018)
- IESO-Society Joint Society Management Committee, January 2016 to December 2018
- IESO-Society Joint Grievance Review Committee, January 2016 to December 2018
- IESO-Society-PWU Joint Health and Safety Committee Society Co-Chair, January 2016 to December 2018
- IESO-Society-PWU Joint Health and Safety Committee Society Representative, May 2009 to December 2015

Non-Society Involvement:

- United Way of Greater Toronto – Board of Trustees
- Toronto and York Region Labour Council, Executive Board Member and IFPTE Local 160/Society Delegate
- International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), Local 160 Delegate
- Ontario Federation of Labour Biennial Conventions, IFPTE Local 160/Society Delegate
- Previous Canadian Labour Congress Constitutional Conventions, IFPTE Local 160/Society Delegate

ELECT CHRIS GRAHAM SOCIETY PRESIDENT

Proven Experience. Trusted Leadership. Positive Results. Lasting Change.

Six years ago, I asked members to support me in my quest to strengthen our union as your first Executive Vice-President (EVP) of the Society of United Professionals. With your support, I joined an outstanding and experienced leadership team of President Scott Travers, and then Secretary-Treasurer Michelle Johnston; I am grateful for their invaluable collaboration and guidance.

Working together we moved our union forward during very difficult and uncertain times. You trusted me with your vote then, and again when you re-elected me EVP, and I am asking for your support one more time, to continue with the important work of our union as your next Society President.

I am humbled and honoured to have been given the opportunity to share my skills, experience, and knowledge, acquired over all my academic and working years, to help build and advance our union. The EVP portfolio is substantial and critically important, and it's with a sense of pride and accomplishment that I now step aside for someone new, while stepping forward to serve in our union's highest elected role. I'm committed to advancing our union's interests, defending our members' rights, and representing all our members. I will continue working diligently to ensure we remain strong, well-resourced, responsive, and resilient – always with an eye to the future.

As a union, we know that a strong, unified public voice builds power. That collaboration forges better solutions. That resilience comes from anticipating and adapting to change. We've all been thrust into a period of considerable uncertainty and change, and we've had our ups and downs as a result, but we've stepped past the worst of the pandemic and economic uncertainty by working together in solidarity!

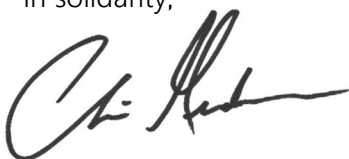
Inflation appears to be waning, but our members are not getting ahead. The potential threat for regressive anti-worker legislation continues to be a concern. Increasingly we are seeing some employers become emboldened when governments appear to be anti-worker/anti-union. There will be challenging times ahead but when workers come together, we are unstoppable. The work of our union is never done, and new barriers continually present themselves providing us with opportunities to rethink, refine, and improve our processes, procedures, and practices as we strive towards continual improvement.

I've drawn upon my last six years of experience as your EVP, and previously as Society's Local Vice-President, Unit Director, and Delegate at the IESO, to continue to deliver outcomes that are fair, reasonable, and pragmatic, as we stand up and fight to defend our members' rights with our employers, government, and even in the courts.

Our strength comes from our members. When our members speak as one voice, we wield tremendous power and can make positive and lasting change.

To keep your union strong your President must work well with elected leaders and staff. I have built strong relationships right across our union, at every level. I am excited to have the opportunity and privilege to serve you as your next Society President.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Graham', with a stylized, flowing script.

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CHRIS GRAHAM, CANDIDATE FOR SOCIETY PRESIDENT

Answers to general questions for all Principal Officers (100 Word maximum per question)

1. *How should the Society become more involved in the broader labour movement?*

We must show up when called upon! Our reputation is constantly improving, however more needs to be done. We must continue to network to strengthen and grow the relationships we've established, and work to create new ones. Recruiting members to participate in rallies, marches, and the campaigns of the labour movement helps. I've created the Society Solidarity Support Squad to help meet our Constitutional Mission (Article 3.2.5) to "Participate in the labour movement to gain support and learn from other organizations and to contribute to its transformation into a modern, progressive collective representing the causes of all types of workers."

2. *What changes would you propose to provide more effective services to our members?*

We continue to work better together, and through the sharing of our experiences, information, and solutions among unions leaders and staff we are providing more effective service to our membership. I have worked to help break down the silos of information between Society bargaining units during my two terms as EVP. As President I'd propose more sharing and additional collaboration. We've learned much from each other, and are growing stronger as one union, united. With intention and creativity, we continually need to innovate more, leveraging technology to better serve our members, and their priorities, to build increased engagement and solidarity.

3. *How would you assist newly organized Society locals in their transition to the Society and its governance structures?*

We must ensure that there are leaders in every workplace. We provide them a helping hand and advice as we coach and mentor them. We'll introduce them to what is available and work to make sure they're supported by our experienced staff. Shadowing an experienced elected representative will help ensure they have the best possible start as a new bargaining unit/local. We've developed an on-boarding guide to help newly elected union representatives get started, and we offer three levels of leadership and union training and are continually adding more online modules to help our elected representatives learn, grow, and thrive.

CHRIS GRAHAM, CANDIDATE FOR SOCIETY PRESIDENT

4. How would you help to coordinate collective agreement negotiations across Society bargaining units to achieve the best results for the individual bargaining units and for the Society as a whole?

As EVP I have engaged our bargaining unit leaders to work better together through the Coordinated Collective Bargaining Committee that I re-established and chair. We must continue to work together more through, and the sharing of strategies and tactics will allow us to gain a strategic advantage when we encounter a similar issue at a different workplace. When our bargaining teams succeed at the negotiating table, it helps the relativity comparison arguments we make; and with enough repeated success this becomes a positive feedback loop for our members, and every worker, as it helps raise the working standards for all.

5. How would you, in the context of your specific role, work to advance the Society's strategic plan?

The five pillars of our strategic plan must intersect with all decision making; continually testing that any decision made is in alignment with the plan, and for the betterment of all members. All motions at Executive Board require the mover to draw a nexus to one or more of our strategic goals – and I will seek those moving motions to link it to our strategic plan. The renewed strategic plan that Society Council Delegates will vote, has remained focused on growth, while driving towards being the union of choice for Ontario's working professionals, providing excellent service and outstanding public advocacy.

Answers to questions for Presidential Candidates (100 Word maximum per question)

1. As President you must chair all meetings of the Executive Committee, Board and Society Council – to be effective you must have a solid understanding of Robert's Rules of Order, command excellent communication skills, and be able to build consensus through vision and leadership. Outline the skills and experience you have in these areas.

I have chaired many meetings of our Executive Board – in person, and online – some with very controversial agendas. I have also chaired our Executive Committee meetings and many sub-committees of our union. I am thankful to former President Travers and President Johnston who gave me the opportunity to substitute for them, allowing me to demonstrate my strong command of Robert's Rules of Order and my ability to efficiently and effectively demonstrate this skill. I have helped deliver Society Council as a Principal Officer for the last six years. I possess excellent communication skills which have helped me to build consensus.

CHRIS GRAHAM, CANDIDATE FOR SOCIETY PRESIDENT

2. As President you have the responsibility to lead the Society's External Relations program. In your opinion, what does this involve and what external relations knowledge and experience would you bring to the role to effectively advance the Society's positions?

President has the sole responsibility for setting our external facing priorities and acting. They are lead spokesperson, and the external face of our union. Having served as EVP for the past six years I've witnessed the many facets of our union's growing external relations program, from the nuclear campaign for Net Zero, to budgetary submission to government, and how we are working to build lasting partnerships. We're investing more to help advance awareness and engagement on the issues that've helped our members, and union grow. We're a trusted advisor with government and the sectors where our members have fulfilling careers.

3. As President you will serve as the chief spokesperson for our union. This will involve talking to media, government and politicians, labour leaders, corporate executives, among many others. What skills and experience do you have that will help you to succeed with this important duty?

I'm a quick study, articulate, and perform well on my feet. I comprehend complex issues and can quickly distill them for better understanding and retention, allowing for more meaningful interactions in support our union's positions and goals. I've worked in communications and government for most of my professional career. I've both received and delivered media training to executives and politicians. I've also been fortunate to have worked at the heart of Ontario's government for almost a decade. I understand government, from the inside and out, and I've worked with labour leaders and corporate executives to deliver lasting change for workers.