

Memorandum

Re: Recommendation for the CAUT Academic Librarians' and Archivists' Distinguished Service Award

Date: October 31, 2019

To: CAUT Council

From: Tim Ribaric, Chair

The Academic Librarians' and Archivists' Distinguished Service Award was established in 1994 to recognize outstanding contributions by academic librarians and archivists and other academic staff to the advancement of the status and/or working conditions of academic librarians and archivists at Canadian universities and colleges. The CAUT Librarians' and Archivists' Committee is pleased to recommend that this award be given to Christopher Dennis of Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Mr. Dennis first began working in the library at the Memorial University in 1985. Over the past 34 years his commitment to advancing the status of librarians and faculty at Memorial and nationally has been exemplary. From 1996 to 2004, Mr. Dennis served on CAUT's Librarians and Archivists' Committee, four years of which he sat as the committee's chair and a member of CAUT's Executive Committee. Though he retired from MUN in 2016, Mr. Dennis continues to engage with and serve MUNFA – most recently on the MUNFA Academic Freedom and Grievance Committee Triennial Review Committee as Chair. This follows on over a dozen years of active engagement with the faculty association's Executive Committee, in one capacity or another, including serving from 1994-1996 as the faculty association's first librarian president.

Chris' term as the MUNFA president coincided with a particularly difficult round of bargaining with the employer in 1995. Letters of support for his nomination for the CAUT award spoke in glowing terms of his leadership during this period and his ability to successfully unite the membership. It was also during this time when Chris nudged one of MUNFA's members to take up work as the unit's Chief Negotiator, the first woman, or among the first, to be Chief Negotiator at a Canadian university at that time. This, in the words of one letter of support, speaks volumes for Chris' support for equity initiatives, not only through the union but within.

Throughout his work as a union activist, Chris has advanced the cause of librarians and archivists at MUN and promoted solidarity among all academic staff. His contributions have had a lasting

impact on his colleagues and his accomplishments are echoed in the numerous letters of support included with his nomination. His career-long list of engagement in the labour movement on Canadian campuses demonstrates that he is an extremely deserving recipient of the CAUT Academic Librarians' and Archivists' Distinguished Service Award.