Union service has been a privilege



The work of an SSTUWA senior officer is varied and all-encompassing. We directly manage multiple portfolios, participate proactively in a wide range of meetings, including with Department of Education executives and government ministers, and of course, we work directly with and for members.

Working with, and for, members has been an absolute privilege and whether that has included robust discussions and debates, resolving member issues, addressing member concerns, attending branch meetings, writing reports, chairing meetings, leading member delegations or actively contributing to EBA negotiations, my commitment to members has never wavered.

The SSTUWA has gone from strength to strength with membership numbers, at the time of writing, being at near record levels. Contributing to our membership growth has been extremely rewarding as has the all-important conversations I have undertaken with members. Advocating for members and resolving member issues has always been an important part of my work.

Over the course of this year, my columns have been shining a spotlight on some of the portfolio responsibilities I have held. These include early childhood education, education support, early career teachers, information communication technology (ICT) in education and oversight of the work of the Growth Team. In addition, other portfolio responsibilities have included Level 3 Classroom Teachers and internally, oversight of the Communications Team.

Education and Training Centre module delivery during union rep, women's contact officer and school leader trade union training (TUT) courses, as well as presentations at other internal and external events, has also been part of my work across the past few years.

Media interviews, podcasts, writing *Western Teacher* articles, addressing delegates at District Council, State Council and at meetings both nationally and internationally - I have proudly represented the voices of our members. Keeping members updated and informed has been my top priority.

There have been many highlights for me over the course of working for the SSTUWA. These include being part of the team that commissioned and landed *Facing the Facts*. This independent report has fundamentally changed the landscape of public education in this state.

Being part of the Log of Claims process from conception, through negotiations, to a registered EBA and finally to implementing the wins, has absolutely been a standout for me. And who can forget the member day of action on 23 April 2024.

The images of our members, attending in the thousands, marching across the Matagarup Bridge and gathering in venues across the state, will stay with me forever. Knowing my involvement in this process has assisted in the improvements to wages and conditions for public education is something I will always be proud of.

To all the members I have met along my union journey since joining the SSTUWA as a first-year teacher way back in 2000, I would like to say thank you. Thank you for the privilege of being able to work with and for you, our members.

Thank you also to my fellow senior officers, Matt, Sharmila and Mary and the whole Executive team who I have had the opportunity to work so closely with in this role, for the past three years. And finally, thank you to the SSTUWA clerical and industrial staff for all you do.

At the time of writing, it remains unclear as to exactly what I will be doing from next year but wherever my journey takes me next, I am sure, public education will be at the core. I would like to wish the incoming senior officers and Executive team all the best and I look forward to watching from afar the next chapter of our mighty union.



By Natalie Blewitt
Senior Vice President

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
ABN 54 478 094 635 © 2026