



Union of Part-Time Faculty at Wayne State University

UPTF / AFT, AFL-CIO

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‘A Diverse Show of Strength’

Nov. 15 demonstration launches UPTF’s first contract campaign

By Amanda Hiber
UPTF Member

UPTF members and allies rallied at Gullen Mall at WSU on Nov. 15 to officially launch our first contract campaign before negotiations began with the WSU administration Nov. 16.

Braving chilling winds, demonstration participants began gathering in front of the Recreation and Fitness Center before noon, chanting, banging drums and hoisting placards such as “WSU Works Because We Do,” and “United We Bargain: Divided We Beg.” Literature about the UPTF was distributed to many interested observers as well as members of the press who were in attendance.

“We are here today because tomorrow we start our historic negotiations with the administration. The diverse show of strength here today by our members and the campus community shows the broad support we have. Like all campus workers, part-time faculty are absolutely crucial to this university’s operation. It’s time the administration compensates us and respects us for the indispensable work we do,” said UPTF



Jen Weaver, left, of GEOC, and Saundra Williams, right, President, Metro Detroit AFL-CIO, at Nov. 15 rally.

President Susan Titus, kicking off the rally.

Other speakers were Mitchell Walker, member of GEOC (Graduate Employees’ Organizing Committee) at WSU; Anca Vlasopolos, member and Grievance Coordinator of the AAUP-AFT at WSU; Saundra Williams, President of the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO; Abayomi Azikiwe of MECAWI (Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice); Carmen Mendoza-King of SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) at WSU; Kristen Bott, member of GEU (Graduate Employees’ Union) at Michigan

State University; and Bill Wylie-Kellerman of the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice.

Speakers addressed the exploitation of part-time faculty at WSU and other campuses nationwide, and contextualized the UPTF within the larger struggle for labor rights. Although speakers came from various labor, community, and student organizations, their message of support for the UPTF was clear and unanimous.

UPTF members also initiated a postcard campaign, focused on the administration and Board of

Governors, at the rally. Dozens of supporters signed post cards, encouraging the administration to negotiate in good faith with the UPTF.

News coverage of the Nov. 15 demonstration was published in the Detroit News, the Michigan Citizen and Critical Moment. And on Dec. 12, radio station WDET’s “Detroit Today” show interviewed UPTF President Susan Titus, AFT Michigan President David Hecker, and Mary Beck of Henry Ford Community College about the movement to unionize higher education in Michigan and nationally.Δ

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A Union of Professionals



The Time Is Now!

UPTF Organizing Committee Update

By UPTF Communications Committee

The UPTF Organizing Committee made significant progress in Fall 2007, including the launch of bargaining with the WSU administration, our first demonstration, election of officers, adoption of the Constitution, our first membership meeting, widespread media coverage, and increased presence on campus and outreach to labor and community organizations.

This is only the beginning, though, of an essential period in our union's development. Member participation is absolutely crucial, especially as bargaining negotiations turn toward more contentious issues and we continue to build the union's foundation.

The O.C. met on Jan. 4 to set priorities and make plans for the winter semester. A top priority for the semester will be to reach out to members one-on-one across campus and beyond. The O.C. is mobilizing for events such as the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day march and rally on January 21, at which the UPTF will have a contingent. The UPTF will also attend the Jan. 30 Board of Governors meeting to make a presentation about the critical contributions our members make to the campus community.

And the first Membership Meetings of the semester will be held at the Reuther Library, both on Jan. 15 at 11 a.m. and Jan. 16 at 1 p.m., in order to accommodate members' busy schedules. The Bargaining and Communication Committees will present updates. These meetings will provide an opportunity for members to meet and get involved with the UPTF.

UPTF membership participation in all of the union's activities is critical and will lead to a stronger first contract and a more powerful union. Now is the time to get involved. There's something for everyone to do. Call the UPTF office to volunteer: 313-832-7902.Δ

Volunteer Tasks:

- Classroom visits
- Data Entry
- Distributing literature
- January membership meeting preparation
- January Board of Governors meeting preparation
- January 21 Dr. MLK march and rally preparation
- Phone Banking to members
- Setting up new office at Maccabees Building

UPTF moving to a new office in January!

The UPTF will be moving to the Maccabees Building at 5057 Woodward Ave. the week of Jan. 6. We will be sharing space on the 3rd floor with our sister unions, the AAUP-AFT, which represents full-time faculty, and the GEOC-AFT, which represents graduate student employees. UAW Local 1979, the professional and administrative staff union at WSU, is also on the 3rd floor.

The February newsletter and an upcoming general membership email will have all the updated UPTF contact information. To help with setting up the new office call: 313-832-7902 or email: uptf@aftmichigan.org.



Annual MLK Day March and Rally

**Monday, January 21
12 Noon**

Central United Methodist Church

**Woodward and Adams
Detroit**

To participate in the UPTF's contingent at the march and rally, call the office:

313-832-7902 / 734-355-4522



First Contract Negotiations Underway

UPTF Bargaining Committee Update

By Tom Anderson

UPTF member and Chair, Bargaining Committee

The UPTF bargaining team has met three times with the WSU administration's negotiating team. Our primary goals in these negotiations are to achieve raises, benefits (including retirement), job security, seniority and to improve working conditions. Once negotiations resume Jan. 11, we plan to meet every Friday. The UPTF bargaining team has offered to negotiate on a second week-day, if both sides can field a team on a second day.

Negotiating a first contract is a lengthy process. Both teams have to peruse each clause in every sentence to make sure the language says exactly what we want it to say. So far, we have tentative agreements on three contract articles, "duration of the contract," "printing and distribution of the contract," and "non-discrimination," and are close on two more.

At this point in the process, we have presented virtually all of our proposals, about 22 different contract articles. When bargaining resumes Jan. 11, the administration team will have had several weeks to think over the economic and seniority/job security aspects of our proposals and should begin to make counter-proposals. What this all means is that we hope to have most of the rest of the non-contentious tentative agreements in place by January (or in early February) and will begin to focus exclusively on the harder issues. After a couple of weeks at that stage in the negotiations, we should have a much better feel for how quickly we will wrap things up and whether we need to engage in escalating organizing activities.

It is thus important to make certain that the UPTF establishes a visible presence in the campus community. We are accomplishing this in several ways: 1.) We held a successful informational picket on campus Nov. 15; 2.) We have had good press coverage with several newspaper articles and the appearance of our president, Susan Titus, on WDET Dec. 12; and 3.) The UPTF will have a contingent at the Jan. 21 Dr. MLK march and rally; and 4.) We will make a presentation at the WSU Board of Governors meeting Jan. 30.

We will have two UPTF general membership meetings Jan. 15 at 11 a.m. and Jan. 16 at 1 p.m., both at the Reuther Library. An update on contract negotiations will be presented at these membership meetings. Subsequently, we will update members on the progress of bargaining at future membership meetings.

Finally, members are encouraged to come to bargaining for the first three sessions Jan. 11, 18 and 25 at the FA B. UPTF members will be meeting outside in the common area near the room where the bargaining is taking place. A notice about this will be on the Jan. membership meeting leaflets as well. Δ

UPTF members encouraged to
attend Bargaining Sessions

Jan. 11, 18 and 25

2:30 pm

**Faculty and Administration
Building (FAB) at WSU**



Union of Part-Time Faculty / AFT, AFL-CIO

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An injury to one is an injury to all!

www.aftmichigan.org

Membership Meetings

January 15, 11 a.m. / January 16, 1 p.m., 2008

Walter P. Reuther Library at WSU
5401 Cass Avenue, Detroit

**Bargaining, Communication and Organizing Committee Updates
Mobilizing activities for the winter term**

- Beverages provided -