

# St. Petersburg College Adjunct Faculty are Forming a Union

## Questions? Ask Us.

By coming together for our union, we can have a voice on campus and work with the administration to fight back against budget shortfalls so that all employees on campus can earn a living wage, including adjunct professors. With our union, we will have the opportunity to participate in SPC's decision-making process and can speak in one strong voice for the changes we need to ensure we can provide our students the best education possible.

### ■ Why are St. Petersburg College adjuncts forming a union?

Because we want to improve our working conditions. At SPC, we are now the majority of faculty. Low pay and lack of job security force many of us to string together jobs at multiple institutions to make ends meet, and most of us do not have access to basic facilities or support from the administration. With our union, we will have a stronger, more unified voice to make improvements to our jobs, and for our profession. Our working conditions are our students' learning conditions.

### ■ How does a union work?

Having our union empowers us to make positive changes at SPC. What is most important to you? Pay increases? Respect on the job? Affordable health insurance? Better working conditions or a retirement plan? A union is the tool that working people, including college and university faculty, can use to advocate for and make improvements where they work.

### ■ Who will be in charge of our union?

This is our union! We have been talking to our colleagues on campus, by phone, attending union meetings, speaking at the Board of Trustees. We are working to ensure our colleagues are ready to join together to win improvements. We will make all of the decisions in our own union. We will have officers and our own union contract. Elections and approval of contracts will be decided by a majority vote, but all members can help shape our union through bargaining surveys, serving on committees, and electing officers. All of the proposals for our contract will come from us. And during the process of achieving a contract with the school, we will decide when the proposed contract is good enough to be ratified by a majority vote.

### ■ How does a union work for adjunct faculty?

Forming a union allows us to bargain for things like better pay, professional development, benefits, job security and more. Through the power of collective bargaining, instructors across the country have won a voice at the table and have been empowered to negotiate with their college and university administrations.



### ■ What happens after we form our union?

After we form our union, we'll prepare to bargain a first contract. Adjuncts will elect a bargaining team and make sure everyone is represented at the bargaining table. Through a survey, all adjuncts will have their voices heard on the issues they believe need to be addressed during the bargaining process.

## ■ What have adjunct faculty won through their unions with SEIU Faculty Forward?

Median pay per course is 25 percent higher where part-time faculty have union representation. Part-time faculty at Montgomery College in Maryland have won pay increases of up to 30 percent. Unionized faculty have an increased level of job security and protections. Part-time faculty at Ithaca College are eligible for two year appointments after three years of teaching. SEIU part-time faculty at Saint Louis University are eligible for coverage under the University's health insurance plan.

## ■ Who is SEIU? What is Faculty Forward?

SEIU is the Service Employees International Union, which is home to 2 million members in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.

Faculty Forward, part of SEIU, is a nationwide movement of faculty members, graduate student workers, students, families and community members. More than 60,000 faculty and graduate student workers on more than 70 campuses nationwide have joined SEIU Faculty Forward and formed unions to improve higher education.

Together, we are building a larger movement to win the investment we all need for higher education. We know that crushing loan debt for students and families and poverty pay for educators are two sides of the same coin. Together, we're demanding:

- Fully-funded college for all
- Student loan debt relief
- \$15/hour minimum wage and a union for all campus employees

## ■ Will we pay dues?

Forming a union allows us to pool our resources and make a bigger difference on campus. No one pays dues until we have: 1) formed our union and 2) negotiated a contract. In other words, we will not pay any money into our union before we know exactly what gains we've achieved through collective bargaining.

## ■ How will the SPC administration respond to our organizing?

With a union, adjunct faculty have a collective voice and a seat at the table to participate in the decision-making process that affect our working and teaching conditions. Having to share power in the decision-making process can be difficult for the administration to accept and they may resort to actions such as intimidating and spreading misinformation, seeking to divide faculty members. By sticking together, we will be successful in forming our union and reclaim the promise of higher education.



## Want to Get Involved?

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