Adjuncts Approve AFT Representation

RIC adjunct professors, by a vote of 156-3, voted to unionize as an AFT affiliate under the auspices of the RI Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals. The RIC/AFT is a local in the same state federation. The election was held over a three day period in April, under the supervision of the RI Labor Relations Board. A total of 306 were eligible to vote, having taught at least six contact hours over the last two calendar years, including summer sessions.

This culminates a 21-year effort by the RIC/AFT to unionize adjunct professors. “We undertook this campaign in order to end exploitation of adjuncts and to protect our own interests,” explained Jason Blank, RIC/AFT President. “As an AFT local, we take seriously the labor movement’s commitment to insure that conditions of employment, benefit packages, academic freedom and due process are guaranteed for all instructional employees. Students are the ultimate beneficiaries because all their instructors will now be full members of the academic community.”

The next step is to formulate a structure that will accommodate the newly-organized adjuncts. For the adjuncts, they need to establish a governing document, nominate and elect officers, including departmental representatives, form a negotiating committee and decide whether to recommend a separate or joint local (with us). For us, the dialogue began at the Executive Committee and departmental representatives meetings, and continues at the membership meeting, Wednesday, May 9, 12:30-1:30 PM, in Clarke Science 128. Ultimately, the RIC/AFT membership will vote on the structure of the new bargaining unit. That vote will be preceded by a membership meeting.
Negotiations

The current contract between the RIC/AFT and the Board of Governors for Higher Education expires on June 30, 2007. On March 31, a letter was sent to the BoG initiating the collective bargaining process. A number of efforts have been undertaken:

- The Executive Committee suggested that we announce some topics for review in the membership meeting on May 9th. Those ideas are:
  - Salaries
  - Fringe benefits, including retirement health and contributions
  - Health insurance, premiums, co-pays, coverage
  - Tuition waivers
  - Working conditions, including class size, physical plant services, teaching load, faculty development and morale, and release time
- The Program Development Committee, mostly composed of departmental representatives, will survey the faculty regarding priorities for negotiations.
- One or more membership meetings will be held to review negotiations processes, gather additional input and update membership about the status of negotiations.
- A Negotiating Committee will be established. To volunteer, call the RIC/AFT office, ext. 9842.

AFT lobbyists are watching the state budget, in particular the May revenue report due later this month. We have been informed that the RIC administration team will consist of Mark Motte, Ivy Locke, Richard Prull, Earl Simson, James Schweikart and Ann Marie Coleman (BoG).

The Council of Higher Education, which consists of all the unions under the BoG, has been reconvened, to coordinate collective bargaining across all units, as we did in 2004. This group is also part of the coalition of organizations working to defeat the governor’s anti-union budget “solutions.”

Tenure and Promotions

We congratulate the following faculty members for their extraordinary service and accomplishments:

**TO THE RANK OF PROFESSOR**

- Mildred Bates  School of Social Work
- Jean Brown  English Department
- Annmarie Mumm  School of Social Work
- Jayashree Nimmagadda  School of Social Work
- Roberta S. Pearlmutter  School of Social Work
TO THE RANK OF ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Robin Kirkwood Auld  Health & Physical Education
Lesley Bogad  Educational Studies
Rachel Carpenter  Adams Library
Susan Dell  Special Education
Anne Goodrow  Elementary Education
Raimundo Kovac  Mathematics & Computer Science
Mustafa Ozcan  Educational Studies
Rebecca Sparks  Mathematics & Computer Science
Rosemary Weston-Gil  Modern Languages

FACULTY GRANTED TENURE

Lesley Bogad  Educational Studies
Susan Dell  Special Education
Anne Goodrow  Elementary Education
Roberts S. Pearlmutter  School of Social Work

**Announcements**

We congratulate the RIC Anchorwomen for their third consecutive Little East Conference Title. On Thursday, May 3, RIC hosts the post-season Softball Championship for the Little East. Best wishes to the Anchorwomen.

We congratulate the students and faculty whose work was showcased in the Faculty Research Conference and Convocation of Scholars.

Best wishes to all the students who will graduate from Rhode Island College on May 17 and May 19.

Jason L. Blank, President