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FROM THE DESK OF AFT VP OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF AND LIBRARIANS

Here's how unions work.

There's something behind the old saying, "it pays to listen." So every now and then, when I hear a fellow union member expressing their personal issues and concerns with regards to their job, I jot it down for several reasons.

ONE, I want to see if the issue is or becomes a common thread within the broader population of our AFT members. TWO, I want to see if there is a way in which the concern at hand can be addressed and fixed.

As vice president of Professional Staff and Librarians, as well as being on the Executive Board, I get a front-row seat listening to employee concerns, not only at NJCU but among union members from the other campuses when we get together at our monthly State Council meetings. There is no uncertainty on my part that we share much "common ground".

With that being said, I have an article I pulled from AFT literature that reminds us how unions work. Every now and then, we need to re-focus on what matters the most: the need to lock arms, stay active, and become full members of Local 1839.

ARTICLE: "How Unions work to make America Strong," AFT Plus Union Page.

Unions work like a democracy. They hold elections for officers who make decision on behalf of members.

Did you know there are over 60 national/international unions that represent millions of workers across America and Canada?

It starts with the formation of a bargaining unit. This is a group represented by a union for dealing with an employer. This group of workers must be either voluntarily recognized by their employer or a majority of workers in the bargaining unit must vote for representation.

1. An employer is required by law to bargain in good faith with a union, although an employer is not required to agree to any particular terms. Once an agreement is reached through negotiations, a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) is signed. A CBA is a negotiated agreement between a labor union and an employer that sets terms of employment for members of that union, including wages, hours, conditions, vacation, sick days, and benefits.

2. After a CBA is signed, an employer can't change details of the agreement without the union representative's approval. The CBA last for a set period of time with the union monitoring to assure the employer abides by the contract. If a union believes an employer has breached the CBA, the union can file a grievance, which may be resolved through arbitration. To learn more about collective bargaining, visit collectivebargainingfacts.com.

3. As with many organizations, union costs are paid by member dues that typically cost about \$50 a month. Most unions have paid staff to manage their operations. While some staff may be paid by union dues, members also often volunteer.

We need every member in AFT Local 1839 to come out to our monthly meetings, become a part of the union conversation and process, so we can maintain our rights.

In solidarity,
Naomi Wright

COPING

Sachie Tsumura-Tmart

CHANGE is inevitable, and throughout life we encounter changes or transitions. We all know it takes some time and effort for us to cope with any change. Positive changes are easier to cope with, but what about negative ones?

Upon arrival of the new president, we've faced so many changes and we tried to embrace them. However, the new administration keeps pushing us and forcing us to accept their version of change as the only reality. Consequently, some of us took early retirement, or left NJCU for better opportunities. Before you read any further, keep in mind our union is with us and you are not alone. When you have any problem, reach out to the union.

Some professional staff members are facing hard changes because they've told they will not be recommended for reappointment for no apparent reason or rationale. If you are one of them, don't give up and don't blame yourself. Continue working hard, fight for your rights, be strong, and seek advice from others immediately. Believe in yourself. You are valuable to the NJCU community. If you know someone in this position, you can provide emotional support for them and show them that you appreciate them.

Know the grievance procedure because you never know when you might need it. According to "Know Your Grievance Procedure" from Council of New Jersey State College Locals, you should immediately contact your Vice President of Professional Staff, Naomi Wright; Grievance Chairperson, David Chiabi; or President, Bill Calathes; or call Sam at the Local office, extension 2216.

Even if you are not currently feeling the pressure, change for the better by strengthening your skills and accumulating professional development hours. Complete projects to benefit you, and share your findings with others. Enhance your problem solving skill and be creative. Above all else, apply for promotion as soon as you are eligible. You are your own best advocate.

Continue working hard, fight for your rights, be strong, and seek advice from others immediately.

1839 EXEC BOARD BACKS COUNCIL ON HISPANIC AFFAIRS PROTEST

Dean Brianik

The Executive Board of AFT Local 1839 has voted to support a letter sent to the Campus Community protesting the Administration's recent firing of long-term NJCU employee Hugo Morales. The letter was written by the Council on Hispanic Affairs (CHA) and said the Administration terminated Mr. Morales "without regard for his outstanding performance in fulfilling his job nor with any acknowledgement or consideration for the leadership he has played in representing our University within the Hispanic community, locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally."

In addition, the CHA letter states there is evidence that senior administration has been on a campaign to "remove Hispanic administrators from leadership roles..." at New Jersey City University. This, says the Council, is particularly ironic because the University is designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution,..." President Sue Henderson is also on the Governing Board of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU).

The letter called Mr. Morales's firing "the ultimate insult to all NJCU staff" no matter where they work or what they do. The administration's action also "has essentially put all employees on notice" are at risk of termination no longer how well or how long they have served NJCU.

The Council urged the administration to rescind the firing and to review its supervisory practices which have created an unhealthy working environment that have resulted in many veteran NJCU employees to take early retirement or resign.

Local 1839's support to CHA came at the same time President William Calathes spoke to the Board of Trustees, telling the Board that "...the level of dissatisfaction, feeling of marginalization, and anger among faculty and professional staff at NJCU is at the highest level that I have ever seen-higher even than last year, when I had the opportunity to

The letter called Mr. Morales's firing "the ultimate insult to all NJCU staff" no matter where they work or what they do.

...speak to you....”

The cause for this anger, Dr. Calathes said, “...continues to be the often brutally implemented top-down management style of this current administration...” and “the utter disdain that the current administration has for the Union...”

He went on to state his opinion “that the administration is no longer fully committed to NJCU’s urban mission, and that is no longer fully committed to its mission as a Hispanic-serving institution of higher education....[S]peaking as the Union Present and a 30-year veteran of our beloved NJCU, the impact of this atmosphere extends beyond faculty morale and affects our students, too, and has serious and direct effects on student recruitment, student retention, and student graduation rates.”

In closing, Dr. Calathes said, “...I respectfully request that these problems be immediately and forcefully addressed and remedied by the Board...” and he asked that the full statement of what he said at the Board of Trustees meeting be entered into its official minutes, ...” or be aware that a censoring of my comments will continue to contribute to the growing lack of confidence that over 1,000 union members have in the current top leadership of our beloved NJCU.”

WORTH THE READ

“WHY PERFORMANCE-BASED COLLEGE FUNDING DOESN’T WORK”

The idea sounds so simple, doesn’t it? If you want to give taxpayers the best bang for the buck:

(A): Set performance goals for public sector workers (including higher education), and

(B) Tie future funding to meeting or exceeding these specific goals and objectives, then

(V) you’ll have better public sector services, like getting more and more students to earn a Bachelor’s Degree within a certain time frame.

But according to The Century Fund while “Pay for Performance” makes sense in theory, it doesn’t pan out in real life. In addition, the Foundation says when this model is used at a time when state support of higher education declines, more of the burden goes onto student backs in the form of higher tuition. Without corresponding increases in financial aid, more students end up dropping out.

“...To date, there are twelve quantitative evaluations of state performance based funding... There is remarkable consistency in the findings, all of which were conducted using different research techniques, spanning different periods of time, and examining various policy outcomes....Across this body of research, the weight of evidence suggests states using performance based funding do not outperform other states—results are more often than not statistically significant...”

The Foundation further states, “in 2015, states actually saw **fewer** students graduate from college than in previous years despite the fact that most states provide incentives for colleges to improve performance....”

According to the Foundation, 3 faulty assumptions are at the heart of the Pay for Performance” theory. They are:

- A. Incentives encourage low-performing institutions to improve.
- B. There is a clear pathway for achieving results, and
- C. Efforts will be sustained over time.

The Foundation says instead of using performance based funding which the rich to get richer, states should adopt a “need-based” formula. This would target resources to colleges serving the most underrepresented student populations. Helping students with the greatest needs would go a lot further toward increasing college completion rates. In short, [b]y prioritizing equity, rather than embedding it within a funding formula, states will be in a better position to improve educational outcomes.”

The Century Foundation. “Why Performance-Based College Funding Doesn’t Work.” College Completion Series: Part Four , May 25, 2016

“Helping students with the greatest needs would go a lot further toward increasing college completion rates”.

RE-THINKING YOUR WORKOUTS

Picture this: You've had a really miserable day. Nothing's gone right and there's one person who's been more than unbearable to the point where you've briefly thought of strangling them.

But, this idea falls by the wayside once you realize prison food has no appeal to you whatsoever. So as Plan B, you say to yourself, "I'm going to work out all my frustrations at the gym."

Well, you might want to re-consider Plan B, too. A study by the Population Health Research Institute at McMaster University in Toronto, says that heavy exercising when you're angry or stressed triples your risk of having a coronary within an hour of the workout.

The study encompassed nearly 12,500 individuals in 52 countries who had suffered their first heart attack. Participants were given a questionnaire. Two of the questions in it pertained to whether they had vigorous physical activity or whether they were upset in the hour before they had the coronary. The researchers found that either heavy physical activity or being upset doubled the risk of a coronary. Heavy physical activity and being stressed tripled that risk.

The doctors cautioned people not to read too much into the results, because as a rule staying in shape helps you avoid heart problems. They also said the limitation of the study is "recall bias because participants ... may differently recall the intensity of exposure to either triggering event and ...may recall the exposures as more proximate to the MI [myocardial infarction] than it actually was."

As for a Plan C, the study did not recommend one. So, it looks like you're on your own. "Physical Activity and Anger or Emotional Upset as Triggers of Acute Myocardial Infarction." Published October 10, 2016.

“...you say to yourself,
“I’m going to work out all my
frustrations at the gym.”

GOOD TO KNOW: TRACKING DOWN YOUR LOST 401(K) RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS

Chances are you held other jobs before you came to New Jersey City University/Jersey City State College. If you worked at a company and contributed funds to its 401(k) pension plan, you have money at stake. But how can you find out, or more importantly, get hold of what's rightfully yours?

Starting next year, according to the American Association of Retire Persons (AARP), the Feds will be able to help. The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) will start including 401(k) accounts in its master searchable pension data base.

The program is voluntary and it allows companies who close their 401(k)'s to transfer those unclaimed accounts into the PBGC or send information about the accounts to the agency. Before you pooh-pooh this, keep in mind that the Feds estimate that each year 24,000 defined contribution plans are ended and most of the closures are at small employers.

For now, this is a starting point. There's been a bi-partisan effort in the Senate to create a long term solution. The plan, put forth by Democrat Elizabeth Warren and Republican Steve Daines, would set up a national data base that would list abandoned retirement accounts: in essence, a type of 401(k) "lost and found."

AARP BULLETIN. November, 2016