

# psu Strong

PROFESSIONAL  
STAFF UNION  
MTA/NEA

Powering UMass Amherst and UMass Boston

## Meet the New Amherst Leaders

Four new officers were elected and one was reelected on March 21. They officially assume their duties July 1.



Photos by Brittany Hathaway

**Mary Malinowski,**  
*cochair*

**My Dream for PSU** is to continue bringing members together and keeping our union strong.

**First Goal:** Support the team producing *PSU Strong*, our newsletter. It connects members and gives them comfort in knowing that they can reach out for help.

**What would you like members to know about you?** I am very approachable and if anyone needs anything, even if I can't help, I will find someone who can. We are in this together and together we can accomplish a lot.

**What do you do in your free time?** I like to work outside and love to work in the dirt. My favorite thing is spending time with my grandchildren.

**Bradford Turner,**  
*cochair*

**My Dream for PSU** is to see our union persevere, grow, and flourish in the coming years. With anti-labor forces organizing against us, we must double down on our commitment to supporting the dignity of the individual, the empowerment of workers, democracy, diversity, and the promotion of social justice.

**First Goal:** Increase membership in PSU. While this is going to be significant challenge if the Janus U.S. Supreme Court case goes against unions, it is not impossible.

**What would you like members to know about you?** I believe that compassion and kindness are characteristics we should encourage in our leaders.

**What do you do in your free time?** Swim, walk, read, watch T.V. and movies, and hang out with my wife and kids.

**Robert McDowell,**  
*grievance officer*

**My Dream for PSU** is that we realize we have power if only we have the courage, commitment, solidarity, and integrity to wield it effectively and fairly.

**First Goal:** Build a stewards' network and find and train my replacement in order to pass the torch as seamlessly as possible.

**What would you like members to know about you?** I am not a zealot. I am just trying to help members be treated fairly.

**What do you do in your free time?** Hike, putter around the house, exercise, watch way too much Boston sports, read not nearly enough, ski, pick a guitar, split firewood, and dream of cleaning my garage.

**Matthew Becker,**  
*treasurer*

**My Dream for PSU** is to increase our membership in the wake of the expected anti-union ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court.

**First Goal:** To learn the ins and outs of being treasurer.

**What would you like members to know about you?** I have been living in New England since July 2015 and am still exploring the area.

**What do you do in your free time?** Read, particularly nonfiction and mainly history. Lately I have been reading about Massachusetts and New England; my current book is about Shay's Rebellion.

**Jennifer Page,**  
*recording secretary*

**My dream for PSU** is that all members realize and understand the power that they own as members of PSU.

**First goal:** Standardize the record keeping of meeting minutes. This may sound like an insignificant thing, but as I learned as a community organizer, record keeping may not feel important in the moment, but is something you are grateful for down the road.

**What would you like members to know about you?** Before coming to UMass five years ago, I had an 18-year career in the corporate world and was never a member of a union.

**What do you do in your free time?** I am a full-time worker and a single mom raising a feminist daughter, fighting for local democracy, and serving on a nonprofit board, as well as cooking, knitting, and reading.

**PSU Boston will hold elections for officers June 12. Watch for emails on voting.**

## MOVING ON: *Next Steps for Outgoing Officers*

**CARL ERICSON:** cochair since 2015

**Next Step:** Retirement, rest, and reorienting to find good things to do.

**Wisdom:** Union activism gave me a better sense of purpose, community, and citizenship on campus and connected me to crucial public issues.

**JOANNE MARTONE:** cochair since 2005, except 2012-13, and bargaining team member since 1999

**Next Step:** Serve as chief steward.

**Wisdom:** My mom was a shy school teacher and found a new voice when she was drafted to the bargaining team. I am not a shrinking violet but followed my mother's path to the gratifying work for my union members.

## NO PAY, NO WAY

By **Judith B. Cameron**, PSU member

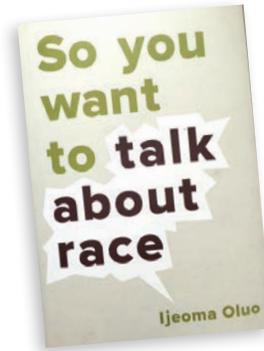
PSU and other campus unions have filed a grievance stemming from the delayed opening January 17 and management's decision to charge full days of vacation or personal time for members who chose not to work following the announcement. This would not apply to staff who had notified their supervisors that they would not report for duty *prior* to the announcement.

A multi-union survey was distributed January 22 to assess past practice and to estimate the impact of those harmed by the university's decision. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents said they were docked pay and 19.1 percent said their pay included regular time for when the campus was closed.

The crux of the issue is that the campus did not open until noon, and employees who decided to take the entire day off were docked for the time the campus was closed. The campus closure was in effect a "lock out," forbidding staff to report to work. The nonpayment of time during the closure is a change that was not part of previous bargaining or contracts.

A hearing will be held on the issue and our unions plan to exhaust all appeals to get payment for employees for hours the campus was closed.

**PSU Strong/Editorial Committee:** Judith Cameron, Thea Costine, Trevor Dority, Jack Hirsch, Sarah Jarman, Dan LaBonte, Patricia Sullivan, Peter Tattlebaum, Ilona Trousdale, and Ferd Wulkan **Designer:** Jack Cavacco  
**Photographers:** Brittany Hathaway and Thomas Sweeney



## BOOK CLUB FOCUSES ON RACISM

By **Dan LaBonte**, PSU member

The Amherst PSU Committee on Racial Equity (CORE) launched its first community outreach, the PSU CORE Book Club. Receiving a Campus Climate Improvement Grant, the group purchased 20 copies of *So You Want to Talk About Race*, written by Ijeoma Oluo. The club began May 8 and will run for 12 weeks. The call for participants generated a great deal of interest from PSU members.

Oluo's latest book was selected because it offers an accessible entry point for participants across all education, work, and life experiences. Through personal anecdotes and reflection, Oluo explores various topics such as privilege, intersectionality, microaggressions, and youth and student voices.

The foundation for the club's discussions around race comes from a facilitation guide created by the book club's organizers: Sam Anderson, Guadalupe Arevalo, Dan LaBonte, Karen Lederer, Jennifer Page, and Risa Silverman. The guide was designed with the intent that participants reflect on the development of their own racial identities as well as determine ways to work collaboratively to create systematic transformation. PSU CORE hopes participants reach three outcomes: to feel empowered to talk openly about race and racism with colleagues in PSU; to engage in intentional group discussion around racism that will help to name and solve individual and systematic problems; and to become more equipped to engage in dialogue with colleagues around race in the broader UMass Amherst community. The ultimate goal is to contribute to improving both personal relationships and overall campus climate. After the completion of this first club, PSU members may form independent groups and contact PSU CORE [psu@external.umass.edu](mailto:psu@external.umass.edu) to access copies of the book and a facilitation guide.



## A Strong Union

"The union has taught me about the power of listening and working together to achieve common goals. Across this country, unions are under attack and we must fight back and support our union brothers and sisters in working toward the common good. Solidarity, it can't be beat."

— Maureen Boyle  
Outreach Coordinator,  
Economics  
30 years PSU member

# YOUR UNION AT WORK

## Winning Fair Salaries: The Salary Administration Program

By Jack Hirsch, SAP PSU Amherst Chair

The Salary Administration Program (SAP), the critical blueprint for determining job classifications and salaries, grew out of the second wave feminist movement. Feminist icons such as Bella Abzug, Barbara Jordan, and Gloria Steinem were leading the demand for gender pay equity. Passage of legislation such as the 1963 Equal Pay Act, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and Title IX in 1972 were forcing institutions to eliminate pay inequity or face unwinnable lawsuits. With no benchmarks for salary comparisons, the University of Massachusetts hired consultants to draft a system that has become the basis for the Salary Administration Program.

Management brought in Olney Associates, a private consulting firm, in the 1970s to secretly develop a system for salary grades and minimum and maximum rates of pay. The Olney system was designed for industry and not an academic institution. For example, the flawed Olney system favored employees in large departments and essentially penalized employees who worked in smaller units. Despite the new laws, the Olney system was rife with gender bias, placing jobs traditionally held by women in low pay categories.

When professionals unionized in 1989, they immediately challenged the Olney salary system. In Amherst, rallies were held with members waving balloons and signs saying, “Let the SAP Run.”

With pressure from our union, UMass agreed to creating a joint committee charged with rewriting the Olney system. Victoria Dowling and Valerie Wentzel from the Amherst campus and Connie Holmsberg and Linda Perrotto from Boston were bargaining members at the time. After years of delays and negotiations, a new SAP was adopted in 1996. With PSU’s insistence, a new appeal system was incorporated. An appeals board composed of three union members, three management representatives, and one arbitrator replaced a board of six manage-

ment members and one PSU member. This change ended the rubber-stamping of management decisions in the crucial area of fair rates of pay. Furthermore, each PSU member has the right to have their position reviewed every three years so salary grades can be upgraded when job responsibilities have changed. The new system also allows for equity reviews, cases where two people are doing fundamentally the same work but one earns a higher rate of pay despite similar lengths of service.

To view the SAP go to: [umass.edu/psumta/all-documents](http://umass.edu/psumta/all-documents).  
 Questions: Boston members email: [Sarah.Bartlett@umb.edu](mailto:Sarah.Bartlett@umb.edu)  
 and Amherst members email: [jhirsch@polysci.umass.edu](mailto:jhirsch@polysci.umass.edu).

PSU GRADE LEVELS*					
UMASS AMHERST			UMASS BOSTON		
Grade	Number	Percent	Grade	Number	Percent
No grade	9	.7	No grade	3	.5
			25	3	.5
			26	12	1.9
24	20	1.5	27	4	.6
25	178	13.5	28	19	3
26	345	26.2	29	58	9.2
27	306	23.3	30	151	23.9
28	205	15.6	31	117	18.5
29	155	11.8	32	101	16
30	56	4.3	33	77	12.2
31	28	2.1	34	78	12.3
32	10	.8	35	17	2.7
33	4	.3	36	5	.8

\*As of December, 2017;  
 Job grade numbers are three higher in Boston for the same jobs and pay.

### Protests at UMass Amherst

Amherst campus unions demanding a fair contract greeted University of Massachusetts trustees at a meeting April 6 at the Old Chapel.



Photos by Thomas Sweeney

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## MOUNT IDA COLLEGE AND THE DIVERSITY FLAGSHIP

*By Peter Tattlebaum, PSU member*

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After months of painting UMass Boston as the poster child of financial mismanagement, the UMass Board of Trustees April 6 approved UMass Amherst's purchase of Mount Ida College for approximately \$75 million. According to Chancellor Kumble Subbaswamy, the campus will serve as an additional instructional site for students from UMass Amherst pursuing jobs or internships in the greater Boston area, and UMass Amherst will purchase it without any financial assistance from the system.

So why are the students, staff and faculty at UMass Boston so upset about the Mount Ida deal?

The picture of a UMass Boston faculty member at Board of Higher Education hearing about Mount Ida sums it up perfectly: "Equity not austerity."

Our Boston campus—which serves far more first-generation students of color than the rest of the system—has been placed on a harsh fiscal diet for the past two years with nothing but austerity on the menu. This is due to the campus having to take on the majority of debt—more than \$400 million worth—to rebuild our crumbling structures, poorly built by the state in the 1970s.

Instead of helping with system reserves, or allowing us to run a deficit by not depreciating our new buildings so quickly, or even working with the students and employees as we lobby the legislature for debt relief—instead of taking any of those steps, the UMass president's office and board of trustees are demanding that we balance a budget that includes upwards of \$25 million annually to pay for debt and depreciation. As Aaron Lecklider, department chair of American Studies, pointed out at a recent community gathering: "Debt has become our brand."

The costs of austerity have included fewer non-tenure track faculty and larger class sizes, the closure of the Early Learning Center, layoffs for 34 classified and professional staff, workload increases, a plan to cut all state funding to centers and institutes (many serving veterans, women, and communities of color), and the announced increase of parking fees to \$15 per day.

Instead of these punitive measures, the Coalition to Save UMB—made up of staff and graduate student employees unions and faculty and student activists—is fighting for equity. Part of

that fight is demanding that the UMass system not allow one campus to cannibalize another.

For more information or to keep abreast of developments:

- Facebook Save UMB: No Cuts, No Layoffs, No Hikes
- [twitter.com/hashtag/saveumb](https://twitter.com/hashtag/saveumb)



*Joseph Brown, top, assistant professor of political science at UMass Boston, and Christine Boseman, IT administrative assistant, below, protested the Mount Ida College deal and budget cuts at a April 24 Board of Higher Education meeting.*