



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS -
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF
TEACHERS, LOCAL 6075
WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY
CHAPTER

Representing
Wayne State University
Faculty and Academic
Staff

NEWSBRIEFS

September 2012

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Our Endorsements on November 6th **WSU Board of Governors, State Supreme Court,** **State Board of Education and Ballot Proposals** **Dan Golodner, *Political Action Committee (PAC) Coordinator***

Each General Election is a prolonged and difficult process, and I want to congratulate the members of AAUP-AFT, Local 6075 for all their hard work this past year in getting petitions signed, educating co-workers on issues, and heading to Lansing to have our voices heard. Now it all comes down to November 6th, when we enter our respective polling places and cast our votes. This is what democracy looks like!

Education is Politics

When I hear people say we as educators should stay out of politics, I point to the ample evidence that education is politics and politics is education. From new crosswalks on Cass Avenue, to our budget, to how we are evaluated, to our right to bargain collectively with our employer-- it is all about politics.

You will be receiving information via e-mail and regular mail about the Presidential election and the contending candidates for the U.S. Senate, the House of Representatives, and the Michigan state house. We encourage you to read through that information and make your choices accordingly.

Here, we'll evaluate the candidates for the Wayne State Board of Governors, the State Supreme Court, the State Board of Education, and the ballot proposals that we feel are directly tied to our places of work and community. AAUP-AFT, Local 6075 endorses the following candidates and proposals:

WSU Board of Governors

Two of the eight positions for the Wayne State University Board of Governors are up for election this year, and we endorse Sandra Hughes O'Brien and Kim Trent to fill these seats. Both women have strong commitments to making higher education affordable and accessible to all students.

Kim Trent is a graduate of Cass Tech who earned a full scholarship in 1987 to Wayne State University, where she earned both her bachelor's degree in journalism and her master's degree in communications. After working at the *Detroit News* and the *Toledo Blade*, she served as Detroit Regional Director for Debbie Stabenow, and as director of Governor Granholm's Office of Southeast Michigan. She is currently student recruitment manager for Michigan Future, Inc., an Ann Arbor based think tank that helps college-preparatory high schools in Detroit recruit students.

Sandra Hughes O'Brien is a graduate of Grand Valley State University and the Detroit College of Law at Michigan State University. She is a practicing attorney specializing in trust and tax law, and the principal owner of the O'Brien Law Office in Northville. As Treasurer of the Hispanic Bar Association of Michigan, she is a volunteer mentor for law-school students at Wayne State, Cooley Law, and the Detroit Law School. *(continued on page 2)*

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She is also a frequent volunteer at public schools in Southwest Detroit.

With their active community work, Trent and O'Brien both have an understanding of the educational challenges facing students in the Detroit area and the tools they will need to succeed in life and employment.

Michigan Supreme Court

For the Michigan Supreme Court, three of the seven seats are up for election this year. This sets the stage for a huge change in how the court operates and decides cases. There are three judges who are running who we feel represent the true nature of a fair and balanced court.

Connie Marie Kelley, Shelia Johnson and Bridget Mary McCormack are the candidates we favor for the Michigan Supreme Court this November. All three have spent their careers helping and protecting Michigan families and victims of crime. They are jurists who protect the rights of workers in sexual harassment and discrimination cases, and who place their primary emphasis on the rights of individuals ahead of corporations.

State Board of Education

Lupe Ramos-Montigny has a lifetime of experience in Michigan's public schools, working for 30 years in the Grand Rapids system as a teacher and administrator. As a former migrant worker who went on to graduate from Pan American University with a Bachelor of Applied Science and from Grand Valley State University with an MA in Elementary Education and Teaching, Ramos-Montigny knows first hand the importance of educational opportunities for the working poor and middle class.

Michelle Fecteau. This is the easiest of endorsements, since Michelle is the Executive Director of our Union here at WSU. Many of you know her for her conscientious and steadfast defense of our members' rights and interests. She earned both a BA and MA from Michigan State University. She served as a staff member of the Garment Workers and the

United Food and Commercial Workers before coming to Wayne State, and taught in the Labor Studies Center for 11 years. Michelle and her husband, Eddie (a high-school teacher in River Rouge), have been deeply involved in issues related to the care and education of children. She and Eddie have been foster parents of nine children, five of whom they adopted. They have two children of their own, one of whom has autism, and were voted Michigan's "Foster Parents of the Year" in 1997. Michelle has served as a board member of the Wayne County Autism Society and Insight: Adoption.

Ballot Proposals

There will also be a large number of ballot proposals this November that will change various aspects of life here in Michigan. Five could change the constitution of Michigan, and one will repeal a current state law. We at the AAUP-AFT feel very strongly about several of these proposals, which will define democracy in the state of Michigan. We recommend:

- **No on Proposal 1**. The Emergency Manager law (aka Public Act 4) allows the governor to declare a local government or school district in financial distress and appoint an emergency manager (EM) to take control with the power to unilaterally nullify all contracts. We find this a complete violation of voter rights since the EM is unaccountable to local citizens and wields dictatorial control, including the power to fire elected officials; dissolve and merge entire cities, counties or school districts; eliminate and suspend collective bargaining agreements; outsource; and add debt. This is not a democratic response to community crisis but a draconian takeover.
- **Yes on Proposal 2, Protect Working Families**. This proposal will establish the people's constitutional right to organize, form, join, or assist unions and to bargain collectively with public or private employers regarding wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment without fear of retaliation by state or local governments. (See the article on page 3.)*(continued on page 4)*

“Yes” on Proposal 2 Vote for Our Workplace Rights!

Jen Weaver, Deputy Executive Director

Michigan voters will have the chance to protect the democratic rights of working people on November 6th by voting for Proposal 2, “Protect Working Families.”

This constitutional amendment will:

- Establish our right to organize, join, or assist unions and to bargain collectively with public or private employers for fair wages, hours, and working conditions.
- Prohibit employers from retaliating against their employees for exercising those rights.
- Prohibit state and local governments from interfering with those rights.
- Authorize the state to restrict or prohibit public employee strikes.
- Protect current laws establishing minimum wages, hours and working conditions.
- Prohibit government from interfering with agreements respecting employees’ financial support of their union.

More than 40,000 volunteers collected the 684,286 signatures submitted in support of the proposal, more than double the state requirement to appear on the November ballot. Here at WSU, 34 volunteers collected 5,000 signatures last spring as part of the campaign.

Since then, volunteers across the state have worked tirelessly, canvassing voters, phone-banking for volunteers, and reaching out to businesses and faith organizations. Right now, almost 600 small businesses have endorsed Proposal 2.

On September 5th, the Michigan Supreme Court unanimously rejected a challenge from corporate special interests to block a vote on this constitutional amendment.

For more information, go to: <http://protectourjobs.com>. For an exciting opportunity to hear a debate on the issues surrounding the “Protect Working Families” proposal, see the box on page 4.

Get Out the Vote!

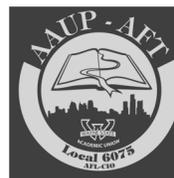
In 2010, we elected a Governor, a state legislature, and a state Supreme Court who are united on one platform: to beat Obama by killing labor. But they weren’t elected by a groundswell of rising support for this anti-labor agenda. They were elected because those of us who care about workers stayed home. Compared to 2008, the Republican vote in Michigan actually fell in 2010 by 174,000 (-9%), but the Democratic vote fell by *1.6 million* (-55%).

This year, we risk losing 80 years of workers’ rights, safety protections, and equity at work for women and people of color. This year, we can take back the state house, re-elect President Obama, and protect our right to organize. But we must get out the vote! We must knock on doors, phone-bank members, donate our money, and encourage the people we know to vote “yes” for collective bargaining. It is not easy work. But it is the work that our parents and our grandparents did to win these rights for us. It is the work we must do to create the world we want.

If you would like to contribute funds to help counter the corporate campaign against the “Protect Working Families” ballot proposal, go online to: <http://protectourjobs.com/donate/>.

If you would like to volunteer for our get-out-the-vote efforts, please contact me at:

313.618.5022 or jenweaver@aaupaft.org



AAUP-AFT, Local 6075 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday, October 3rd
12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Bernath Auditorium
in the
Undergraduate Library

Please mark your calendars and join us!

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- **Yes on Proposal 3, favoring renewable energy.** The proposal essentially calls for a change in the Michigan constitution to increase our renewable energy standard to 25% by 2025. Known as the “25x25” ballot proposal, it will bring over 50,000 new jobs to the state according to a recent Michigan State University study. It’s the right thing to do for the future of our children.
- **Yes on Proposal 4, protecting homecare standards.** This proposal would place features of the Michigan Quality Community Care Council in the state constitution. It would allow collective bargaining for in-home care workers, require training for those workers, and provide financial assistance to low-income seniors and the disabled. The AAUP-AFT sees this proposal as a necessary good for the quality of life of Michigan’s citizens, and it’s the right thing to do for our parents.
- **No on Proposal 5, requiring a supermajority to raise taxes.** Billionaire Matty Moroun is funding this initiative to protect himself and wealthy friends from paying their fair share of taxes. By requiring a two-thirds (2/3) majority for any tax reform that might distribute the tax burden more equitably, Moroun hopes to nullify majority rule and improve his prospects for controlling the legislature.
- **No on Proposal 6, requiring voter approval of new international bridges or tunnels for motor vehicles.** This is another of billionaire Matty Moroun’s efforts to maintain his monopoly control of the Ambassador Bridge as the only bridge between Detroit and Windsor. “No” to Matty’s billions.

**Come to the Debate on
“Protect Working Families,” Ballot Proposal 2**

Tuesday, October 2nd at 7:00 p.m.

The Southfield Westin Hotel

(1500 Town Center, North of 10 Mile, East of the Lodge)

Rich Studley, *President & CEO*, Michigan Chamber of Commerce

vs.

Ken Brock, *Manager*, “Protect Working Families” Campaign

The debate is sponsored by the Detroit Area Chapter of the Labor & Employment Relations Association. Reservations for cocktails at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 6:15 p.m. cost \$50 for non-members, but attendance is free for the debate at 7:00 p.m. In either case, RSVP to convener Mark Cousens at 248.355.1744, or at lera@cousenslaw.com, or go online to the Detroit LERA Event at: <http://www.leraweb.org/detroit-reservations>.

Wayne State University Chapter, AAUP-AFT Local 6075

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