



A Union of Professionals



## News Release

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### **Faculty Alliance of Miami Win Union at Miami University**

OXFORD, Ohio—More than 800 faculty members at Miami University officially have a union today after the State Employment Labor Relations Board certified that an overwhelming majority of faculty cast ballots in favor of forming a new chapter of the American Association of University Professors/American Federation of Teachers. The new union includes tenured and tenure-track faculty members and longer-term contract faculty including teaching professors, clinical faculty and lecturers. Voting took place via mail ballot election from April 18 through May 2. The result was 450 to 241.

The Faculty Alliance of Miami has spent more than a year organizing for the union election, motivated by shared governance issues, workloads, and the arbitrary and unfair dismissal of a large number of faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic. The chapter filed with SERB to include these faculty members in the unit, but the board determined they would be a separate bargaining unit. The need for a stronger tenure system and more equitable compensation were additional factors that pushed Miami faculty to form a union.

English professor Cathy Wagner, a lead faculty organizer for FAM, said: “We are thrilled. This win means faculty’s voices will be heard. The teacher-scholar mission that made Miami a great school has been under threat from an administration that does not understand that teacher working conditions are student learning conditions. Now, we have the collective power and legal right to win changes for ourselves and our students.”

Paul Schaeffer, biology professor and organizer for FAM, said: “This victory is the outcome of years of hard work. As an organizer, I felt that the outcome was never in doubt after talking to so many of our colleagues and acting on their clear mandate. This victory will give us the pathway to use our collective voice to bring this mandate to fruition, and to ensure that the faculty are heard as we work to improve faculty working conditions and student learning conditions through collective bargaining. We look forward to beginning the bargaining process with the administration.”

Irene Mulvey, president of the American Association of University Professors, said: “This incredible win at Miami University is an inspiration to the growing academic labor movement. Fed

up with an administration that treated the faculty like cogs in a machine, our colleagues at Miami University demanded and won the right to have a powerful collective voice on the job to fight for academic freedom, shared governance and a more just university for all. We are thrilled with today's result, which will promote and strengthen the core academic mission at Miami University."

Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers, said: "Today, faculty at Miami University voted for a union because they want to teach and be respected for the work they do. They understand the basic maxim that together we can accomplish far more than we ever can alone. Faced with an administration that treated them as expendable widgets—rather than the knowledge creators, researchers and teachers they are—they joined together to demand a seat at the table and a real voice in their work lives. Now, faculty look ahead to bargaining a first contract with stronger tenure, pay and academic freedom that will improve Miami and the students that it serves. I could not be prouder, and we are honored to represent them."

Faculty Alliance of Miami organizers say they want to use collective bargaining to promote more stable employment and strengthen the university's educational mission.

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The AFT represents 1.6 million pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; nurses and healthcare workers; and early childhood educators.

Unionized and nonunionized chapters of the AAUP champion academic freedom, advance shared governance, and promote economic security for all who teach and conduct research in higher education. Since 1915, the AAUP has shaped American higher education by defending standards that support quality education and ensure higher education's contribution to the common good.