

October 24, 2013

Lesley University Adjunct Faculty File to Form Union with Adjunct Action/SEIU

BOSTON – Adjunct faculty teaching at Lesley University have filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to form a union with Adjunct Action/SEIU and become part of a growing movement to improve the future of higher education.

Jennifer Navarro, adjunct professor in Expressive Therapies said, “We have worked hard to reach this moment, and we can’t wait to vote yes! It’s an exciting time as adjunct faculty in Boston and across America are finding that we are stronger together.”

Lesley, like most colleges and universities, relies on a large group of highly trained contingent faculty to teach at their Boston and Cambridge campuses. These college and university faculty members typically face tenuous employment, inconsistent benefits, inadequate or changing office space and equipment, and little/no representation in faculty governance – placing significant hurdles in their mission to provide high quality education to students.

The shift from full-time to contingent faculty workforce in higher education has been dramatic. In the early 1970s, almost 80 percent of faculty were tenured or on the tenure track. Today, only 33 percent of faculty remain in tenured or tenure-track jobs. As a result, being a university professor is often a low wage job.

Lesley instructors are looking forward to joining Tufts University part-time lecturers who voted in September to join Adjunct Action/SEIU. Lesley University photography instructor Stella Johnson said, “We are excited and encouraged by the recent outcome of the union election at Tufts. This result, along with organizing efforts across Boston and other cities reflect the need to change the status quo and provide healthy teaching environments for both teachers and students. By strengthening the support for part-time faculty we will improve the educational experience, and as a result advance enrollment and retention. We look forward to working together with the administration to solving the issues that confront our campus and profession and give higher education a brighter future.”

The NLRB will determine the date of the election.

In addition to Boston adjunct faculty union organizing efforts and victories, part-time instructors at the University of the District of Columbia in Washington, D.C recently filed for an union election with the NLRB. Adjunct faculty at the University of LaVerne, Loyola Marymount University and Whittier College in southern California are building support to form their union with SEIU, creating a coast-to-coast movement to address the crisis in higher education and the declining standards that endanger the profession.

###

Adjunct Action is a project of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the nation’s largest and fastest growing union and home to over 18,000 unionized college and university faculty who have won improvements in pay, job security, evaluation processes, and access to retirement benefits.

www.adjunctaction.org