Dear faculty,

I write you today to introduce myself, I am Erin O’Mara and I am running for First Vice President for local 2000 AFT. I have been working for WCCCD as an adjunct Professor of Political Science since 2008. I was hired full-time in 2017. I also worked at Macomb Community College as an adjunct from 2008-2017 as well as Oakland Community College 2013-2017. I Graduated from Western Michigan University, MA Political Theory in 2008.

Some basic points of how to immediately solve some issues in local 2000 AFT; First off, all members need to have access to the contract. I propose we have the contract available at every meeting for members to have and read. This will alleviate many questions that members have. More information is essential to understanding our issues. Secondly, we all worry about “ghost” classes. All members need to be active in making sure that the contract is being abided by administration. The leadership, Stewart’s and all faculty must be vigilant and aware. We have a list of the classes available at class selection. We then cross reference that with what classes are being taught at each campus. Yes it will take members actually doing work, looking at the classes and if anything doesn’t match up, you immediately bring that to a Stewart or Leadership and that is an immediate grievance that we win every time. What we cannot have, our own members in collusion with administration in a direct violation of the contract. The Union is a collective, with a collective interest to promote and protect all members.

I grew up in a Union household. My father was a Detroit Laborer, local 334 (so was I from 18-21). The only reason my family was middle class was the Labor Union. The only reason that I have a full-time job is our Union. It was local 2000 AFT that ensured that adjunct professors from WCCCD were to be hired in 2017. In fact; for my experience it was literally Local 2000 that forced administration to open up the interview process for my department, because the adjunct faculty were not even informed that full-time positions had opened up. I want to continue on with that tradition. I have spent 11 years teaching at multiple community colleges. They are all structured in a similar fashion, with a growing administrative bureaucracy that in most cases is a direct threat to faculty and education in general. All community colleges are being run like corporations today. The maximizing of profits at our expense is very problematic. I believe my experience as an adjunct professor at the three largest community colleges in the tri-county area, gives me the experience needed to deal with and fight on our behalf against this structure.

I believe we should be fighting for more adjunct professors to have a chance at a full-time position. I believe that faculty should be treated with respect from their employer. That we fight for better working conditions as well as transparency. (I believe we should fight for better pay as always for both full time and part time alike). I believe we should demand more transparency from administration. So enrollment is down, that is the reason classes have been cut. Sure, where are those numbers coming from? Why don’t we have access to that information if that is the justification for our members losing classes. These are questions that I have as a fellow union member. Maybe it is impossible to find, maybe we aren’t allowed to see that information, I don’t know. But the reason I am running is because I want to know. I want to fight those fights. I am sick of asking those questions myself. I thank you for your support.

Sincerely, Erin O’Mara