

## Caprice Lawless Bio

What started with a few adjunct faculty crying into their beer over the way things are at school evolved rapidly into something far more powerful, once we found the AAUP. Our tiny chapter at Front Range Community College grew to chapters at several colleges within our 13-college system, and before you knew it we were hosting the first-ever Mini-Innie, the Damn It! Summit, Adjunct Survival Workshops, an adjunct-focused Health Care Fair, an Adjunct Film Series, monthly pub crawls, and launching first a House bill and, the next year, a Senate bill in the Colorado Legislature. We published *The Adjunct Cookbook* in 2014, then last year, *The Adjunct Coloring Book*. In December we hosted the first-ever AAUP Winter Break Unemployment Workshops in three metro-area cities. Our work finds facts, turns heads, changes minds, snags headlines, and dogs college administrators. In this work, my B.A. in Communications, M.A. in Journalism and M.A. in Education are being used to help higher education stay strong. The powerful purpose of this work and the wonderful people in it inspire me to keep at it, with an imaginative and not-too lawless caprice.

## Candidate Statement for Caprice Lawless

When the Organizing for Change slate -- Rudy Fichtenbaum, Henry Reichman, Michele Ganon, and, starting in 2016, Caprice Lawless -- took office in 2012, the AAUP was hemorrhaging members. We regularly needed lines of credit to meet payroll. Chapters and members complained that the national office was often unresponsive. Staff morale was low. Today membership is growing and we have several million dollars in the bank. More organizers have been hired and members have seen the impact of our new digital organizing program and the Association's expanded social media presence. New activists like Caprice Lawless, whose creative ideas have energized community college adjuncts, have stepped forward at all levels. The Association's talented and dedicated staff, under the leadership of executive director Julie Schmid, are working more effectively than ever. The AAUP's visibility and stature are higher than in decades. Our support of academic freedom and shared governance has intensified.

At the same time, both the AAUP and the entire academic profession face unprecedented and severe challenges. As Henry Reichman discusses in the January-February *Academe*, Donald Trump's election presented higher education with a new reality, posing profound threats to the hallowed principles on which the AAUP was founded. The likelihood that the U.S. Supreme Court will soon overturn precedent and, on the basis of a spurious First Amendment argument, bar union chapters from collecting fees from non-members whom they must represent poses a grave danger to our finances and ability to function.

Fortunately, owing to the hard work and devotion of so many AAUP leaders and members on campuses and in state conferences across the country, we are in a strong position to weather the storms ahead. But it certainly won't be easy!

In the immediate aftermath of the 2016 election we pledged to:

1) oppose the privatization of our public higher education system and fight for higher education as a common good, accessible and affordable to all;

2) oppose discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or national origin and fight for an equitable and welcoming educational environment;

3) oppose attacks on unions and the economic security of faculty and staff and fight for the rights of everyone engaged in teaching and research, whether on the tenure track or in contingent or graduate employee positions, full- or part-time;

4) oppose violations of academic freedom and the broader rights to free expression in the academic community and fight for strengthened protections for and renewed commitment to academic freedom and shared governance.

This remains our program today.

The Organizing for Change slate is proud of what we have helped the AAUP accomplish. With both a sober recognition of the ominous threats we face and an optimism fueled by the support and energy of our colleagues, we are eager to build on our successes to meet the daunting challenges ahead. As always, the best answer to those who attack our colleagues, our students, our principles, and the common good is clear: Organize! Organize! Organize!