

My name is _____Bethany Letiecq_____, and I am a candidate for the position of _____Vice-President_____ in the AAUP Advocacy Local 6741 of AFT.

I am running as part of the [United Faculty for the Common Good \(UFCG\)](#) slate. We share the conviction that higher education is under attack and we need to organize and fight back. The crisis of higher education is decades in the making and won't be fixed with a business as usual approach. Issuing declarations and reports alone will not stop the attacks on academic freedom from politicians, unelected, politically-appointed boards of trustees, and wealthy donors. A business as usual approach will not secure the increased funding we need to reverse the adjunctification of the professoriate and stop burdening students with spiraling debt. We believe that the only way to create the system of higher education that we need is through a commitment to building labor power and solidarity, uniting faculty of all ranks, building coalitions with our other campus (non-faculty) colleagues, and expanding political power through coalitions with allied student, climate, and social justice organizations at the local and national levels, among others. We take inspiration from other grassroots and rank-in-file labor organizations—foremost [Higher Education Labor United \(HELU\)](#), but also those in K-12 education and other sectors, such as [Caucus of Rank-in-File Educators \(CORE\)](#), [Unite All Workers for Democracy \(UAWD\)](#), and [Teamsters for a Democratic Union \(TDU\)](#)—that are focused on transforming their unions, local and national communities, and the broader political landscape through organizing and direct political action.

Members of the UFCG slate believe in the radical idea that higher education should serve the common good. It must be an incubator of critical inquiry, unapologetic dissent, and rigorous research free from political, donor, or corporate interference. Higher education should be a building block of a healthy democracy and an economy that works for all. It must be an engine for social mobility, challenging forms of systemic oppression based on race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, age, (dis)ability, immigration status, or colonialism. And all who work in higher education must be paid fairly and enjoy job security.

I am asking for your support for my candidacy and those of my fellow UFCG slate members because we believe a better university is possible and worth fighting for. I am also asking for your support because I believe that Local 6741 should be represented by leaders of advocacy chapters who know what it takes to organize and build power, especially in right to work states. I have been organizing at George Mason University, Virginia's largest public university, since 2016, fighting undue donor influence, academic capture, adjunctification, privatization of presidential searches, and governing board overreach into faculty affairs. As a part of the UFCG slate, I want to support advocacy chapter organizing and power building and work to bring needed resources and attention to advocacy chapters nationwide.

Join us and help us build higher education for the common good. For more on our slate, visit: <http://www.unitedfacultyforthecommongood.org>.

Bio:

Bethany Letiecq is Associate Professor of Research Methods and co-founder of the Anti-Racist and Decolonizing Research Collaborative in the College of Education and Human Development at George Mason University (GMU). Prior to joining GMU's faculty, she worked at Montana State University where she helped to organize their first faculty union, the Associated Faculty of MSU affiliated with MEA-MFT. In 2012-2013, she also served on AFT's Higher Education Program and Policy Council. In 2013, she joined the faculty of GMU, and in 2016, she worked to revitalize and grow GMU's AAUP chapter, serving as president from 2016-2021 (she's currently serving as vice-president). During that same period, she served on GMU's Faculty Senate, including chairing the Faculty Matters committee and serving on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Grievance Committee. After working alongside the student-led Transparent GMU and UnKoch My Campus to expose undue donor influence at Mason, she then served on the GMU Gift Acceptance Policy Committee, where she worked with faculty and administrators to revise GMU's policy and advance greater donor transparency. In 2021, she also co-founded the George Mason University Coalition for Worker Rights, which aims to build a wall-to-wall union and better the working conditions of all workers on campus. As part of the Coalition, she fought most recently alongside SEIU32BJ and custodial workers, the majority of whom were Central American immigrant women who were experiencing wage theft, intimidation, retaliation, and poor working conditions at Mason.

In addition to campus organizing efforts, from 2018-2021, she served as member-at-large of the Virginia Conference of the AAUP and is currently serving as president. She has also served on several national AAUP search committees and in 2022-2023 served on the AAUP/AFT Partnership Implementation and Coordination Team. She lives in Northern Virginia with her partner, children, and Reyna, the family pooch.