



Pictured: Members of the AFSCME Higher Ed. bargaining team celebrate after ratification votes were tallied, with a vast majority in favor of the new contract.

MESSAGE FROM AFSCME MARYLAND PRES. PATRICK MORAN **Solidarity Summer**

July was a historic month, from a two-week-long vote to ratify the first ever system-wide union contract for nearly 6,000 workers for the University System of Maryland (USM) to certifying a union of nearly 400 workers for the Anne Arundel County Public Library (AACPL) system.

I still remember when we first floated the idea of having a single contract for the entire university system. Negotiating individual union contracts for every school was not only inefficient but also left too much room for system leadership to pit workers from different campuses against each other.

It was no easy feat to make this possible. During the pandemic, AFSCME members tirelessly advocated to their legislators that the law needed to be changed to allow negotiations on a unified contract. Former Governor Larry Hogan tried to veto the legislation, but legislators overrode his veto and SB 9 was signed into law at the end of 2021.

And now, after nearly two years of negotiations, rallies, actions, and more, I'm so excited that AFSCME Higher Education members have overwhelmingly ratified this new contract. But this win didn't just happen out of thin air. Across these campuses, hundreds of new members have joined us, and management and system leadership have noticed. It's made all the difference, and there's just no denying the power of our union and what we can accomplish when we work together in solidarity.

- AFSCME Maryland Council 3 President Patrick Moran



99.8% vote in favor of new contract for USM Workers

From July 8 through July 18, AFSCME members who work for the University System of Maryland (USM) cast their votes in favor of a historic new contract. And on Friday, July 19, the votes were tallied: **Over 99% of workers voted YES in favor of ratification!**

This ratification is a historic moment because for the first time, this contract covers the entire system rather than each individual institution, raising the bar for workers across the state. The new contract contains wage increases (including cost of living adjustments (COLA), longevity pay, and merit increases); improved leave policies, including the ability for employees to donate sick leave to one another; protections for workers in the event of extreme heat or dangerous air quality; health and safety trainings; and more.

Thank you to everyone who voted, encouraged their colleagues to vote, signed up new members, helped out at a voting location, and so much more. Be on the lookout for upcoming trainings and meetings on the provisions of the new contract to ensure that you have access to all the benefits we've won.

Read more about the contents of the new contract here: bit.ly/usm-ta-summary

CALLING ALL SUPERVISORS!

In order to form our AFSCME MD Supervisors Union, we **NEED** supervisors to join us & **VOTE YES** for a Supervisors Union!

To **VOTE YES** for AFSCME, just scan the QR code and complete the AFSCME membership form. When you complete this form, you also **VOTE YES**.



AFSCME Members in Action

🎉 Congratulations to AFSCME Maryland Secretary-Treasurer Cherrish Vick for being named to *The Daily Record's* Leading Women Under 40 List!

💧 Local 1678 members came together to make sure that members had access to sufficient water during the recent heat wave, distributing bottles at various facilities in Jessup.

💰 A few weeks ago, members of the Pay Equity and Salary Competitiveness Labor Management Committee (LMC) met with the State discuss much needed changes to salary schedules and to address wage compression and equity issues. Special thanks to LMC members Ginger Noble (Local 354), Jamaal Craddock (Local 3167), Patrick Okafor (Local 1678), and Cherrish Vick (Local 112)!

🏢 Earlier this year, AFSCME members fought for new legislation that would transfer MDH employees working in state hospital facilities to the Correctional Officers Retirement System (CORS), allowing those members to retire at age 55 or after 20 years of service. Check out afscme.org/mdhcors for more information, and please share with those who might be impacted (for the better!). Thanks to every member who fought for this change!



Pictured: Cherrish Vick, Leading Women Under 40 honoree



Congratulations to Anne Arundel Library Workers United (AALWU)!

Members of AALWU successfully filed for recognition of their union at the beginning of July. The union represents nearly 400 workers: librarians, library associates, circulation staff, building care technicians, and others who are employees of the Anne Arundel County Public Library (AACPL) system.

AALWU members join workers at Howard County Public Libraries and the Enoch Pratt Free Library, who have all unionized with AFSCME. Welcome to the AFSCME family, AALWU!

Member Spotlight: Sabrina Razvi

Sabrina Razvi's commitment to her community is evident both in her work as a Library Associate at the Severn Branch of Anne Arundel County Public Libraries (AACPL) and in her organizing efforts with the new staff union for AACPL workers, Anne Arundel Library Workers United (AALWU). As a Library Associate, Sabrina wears many hats, coordinating programming that ranges from a K-pop dance program to weekly teen hangout nights, while also providing daily support to patrons as they access library services. In short, **Sabrina's job is to "make the library a warm and welcoming spot."**



Pictured: Sabrina Razvi

Last year, Sabrina and her colleagues began to organize AALWU, and earlier this month, they successfully filed for official recognition of their union. **"I wanted a union to ensure fair treatment and better working conditions and a collective voice for all employees to enable us to advocate not only for ourselves but also our communities,"** says Sabrina. She hopes that the union will allow workers to **"shine a spotlight on everyday issues that the administration doesn't see."** As AALWU enters their first contract negotiations, Sabrina is committed to fighting for **"better pay and improved benefits"** to **"help retain quality talent, enabling us to better serve communities and most importantly protect what we've already strived to achieve."**

We'll leave you with Sabrina's words for anyone who hasn't yet joined or isn't involved in their union: **"In the past, I've heard some staff say that it's hard to understand unionizing if they haven't experienced glaring inequities. It's not just about personal grievances -- it's about advocating for fairness and equity for all. Unions can help maintain the benefits and good things we already have and have achieved. To those who may be facing challenges, I would tell them that their voice matters."**