

NEWS RELEASE

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State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota Faculty Votes to Unionize

The faculty of State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota (SCF) has spoken and by a vote of 75-24 becomes the newest United Faculty of Florida (UFF) chapter. The faculty voted 75.8 percent for UFF with 92.5 percent of the faculty voting. The vote count followed a three-week period of balloting by mail and was certified by the Florida Public Employees Relations Committee today.

“The State College of Florida faculty, over campuses and through departments, have come together to support each other in gaining a seat at the table,” said Dr. Courtney Ruffner, professor of English. “We have asked to be heard, to be taken seriously, to be respected by our Board of Trustees and administration and have been met with silence. Our community has come together to complete our college family by showing its support in our decision to unionize. It is clear that we all want to better the working and learning environment for our faculty, our students and our community at large. Our union with the United Faculty of Florida can help us achieve that desire.”

“I want to congratulate the dedicated faculty at the State College of Florida as they become a part of the United Faculty of Florida,” said Dr. Jennifer Proffitt, UFF president. “This vote is based on the premise that the faculty, who are the cornerstone of this institution, should have a collective voice in determining what is best for the college and the students it serves. This isn’t about confrontation; it is about ensuring that all stakeholders have a voice in determining the future of this great college and ensuring that its core mission -- the education of the next generation of leaders -- is fulfilled to its greatest potential. We look forward to working with these committed and dynamic faculty members for the betterment of the State College of Florida and higher education around the state.”

“This effort also stands as an example to other colleges that are beset with Boards of Trustees whose awareness of educational imperatives is little or none, and beholden to political and business interests that appoint them. We look forward to working with the board in negotiating the future for SCF and its teachers, students, and stakeholders,” said Del Jacobs, director of Film and Media Studies.

UFF represents more than 20,000 faculty members at 11 state universities, St. Leo University, ten colleges, and at four graduate assistant chapters.