

# PSU profs say new contract is Step 1 in combatting creeping corporatization

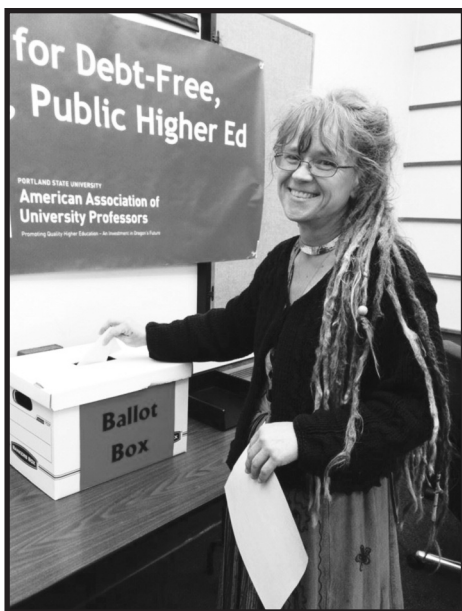
**Greater job security, and modest raises, will help stabilize faculty**

Casting ballots in person April 15 and 16, members of American Association of University Professors (AAUP) at Portland State University (PSU) voted by an overwhelming 97 percent margin to ratify a new collective bargaining agreement.

AAUP represents 975 full-time faculty at PSU. [Part-time faculty are represented by a separate union, American Federation of Teachers, which ratified a contract earlier this year.]

The new AAUP contract will provide greater job security to hundreds of faculty who have been working on renewable one-year contracts: PSU commits to give two- or three-year contracts to 80 percent of faculty members who've been at the school at least four years.

The contract also includes raises that total at least 6.5 percent by its Nov. 30, 2015 expiration, plus a new salary floor of \$40,000 that will bring compensation up even more for those be-



**American Association of University Professors union member Allison Brown, an instructor of applied linguistics at Portland State University, casts a ballot for the contract. (Photo courtesy PSU-AAUP)**

low it.

AAUP had great difficulty getting an acceptable agreement through the normal bargaining process. Only after faculty authorized a strike and set an April 16 strike date did the PSU administration back off of regressive pro-

posals to strip the union of any say over policies on evaluation and promotion and to give administrators the right to change anything not spelled out in the contract.

AAUP calls the agreement a first step in a campaign it's undertaking to change PSU's direction. PSU's administration has adopted a corporate mindset, says AAUP spokesperson David Osborn — in which growing numbers of overpaid managers see themselves as the principle decision-makers. And the vision the administrators are seeking to implement involves expensive capital projects that are aimed to attract out-of-state and foreign students — because they pay higher tuition. But Osborn said those choices are diminishing the value of a PSU education, and making tuition unaffordable for the kind of non-traditional first-generation college students that PSU has historically served. A case in point is that actual classroom instruction has declined to just 33 percent of the university's budget; AAUP wants it back up to 50 percent.

"Instruction is the core mission of this institution," Osborn said. "It doesn't seem unreasonable to have half the dollars going to that."



**Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 apprentice Marshall Crites competes in pipe threading discipline during an of apprenticeship contest held April 12-13 at the Matt J. Walters Training Center in Tualatin. Marshall, a 5th term HVAC-R fitter, took first place in his division. Working in the background is Matthew Busik, a 10th term apprentice.**

## UA #290 apprentices compete

Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 held its annual apprenticeship contest April 12-13 at the Matt J. Walters Training Center in Tualatin.

Twenty-seven apprentices competed in one of four disciplines — welding, pipefitting, HVAC/Refrigeration, and plumbing. Awards were presented to the top three finishers in each discipline, with each winner advancing to

the regional competition in Pasco, Washington in June. Winners were: Victor Yaschenko, welding; Dallas Crone, pipefitting; Marshall Crites, HVAC/R; and Matthew Seats, plumbing.

The contest consists of various timed competitions doing work from their specific trade, such as welding, piecing together piping systems, tube bending, soldering, reading blueprints, and more. There also is a written test.

"Managing your time is probably the most difficult thing. And (not) making bad decisions," said winner Dallas Crone. "The written test is easy. Either you know the answer or you don't."

Apprentices are required to have 8,000 training hours and 1,080 school hours over a five-year period before turning out as a journeyman. Apprentices are paid while on the job.

Local 290 currently has 365 apprentices in various stages of completion. It opened its training program April 22, and more than 600 people applied. The training committee has not decided how many new apprentices it will accept.

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