

NLRB rules adjunct faculty can unionize at private, religious colleges, universities

TACOMA — In a groundbreaking decision with national implications, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled Dec. 19 that full-time, non-tenure-track faculty members at Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) can form a union with Service Employees International Union Local 925.

The ruling — backed by three of the five board members — comes months after PLU's administration blocked the counting of ballots, asserting that its religious affiliation makes it exempt from federal labor law. The administration also claimed that full-time contingent faculty (or adjunct faculty) were managerial employees under the 1980 Supreme Court decision *NLRB v. Yeshiva* and could not unionize.

The NLRB sided with the contingent faculty, ruling they can organize. In deciding the questions of religious exemption and managerial status, the Board established new tests for examining the role of faculty at universities. Under the new tests, faculty must carry out a religious function to be denied the right to collective bargaining, not merely teach at a religiously-affiliated college; and, they must exercise effective managerial control to be considered management employees.

The NLRB decision has far-reaching implications for religiously affiliated colleges and universities nationwide that have tried to keep faculty from unionizing.

"Today, institutions of higher learning look increasingly like big businesses because corporate boards and administrations have marginalized the most important job on campus — teaching," SEIU President Mary Kay Henry said in a statement.

In a statement, PLU said it will decide whether or not to appeal the ruling after the union election results are final.

Elliott elected director of Machinist District W24

Chip Elliott was elected president/directing business representative (DBR) of Machinists District W24. He ran unopposed in a delegates' election held Dec. 6.

Elliott has been serving in the post since July 2013, when he was appointed by the Executive Board to finish out the term of DBR Robert Wilson, who retired.

That term expired in December 2014. Prior to that, Elliott was one of three assistant directing business representatives of District W24.

Machinists District Lodge 24 and Woodworkers District Lodge W1 merged in January 2011 to create the International Association of Machin-



CHIP ELLIOTT

ists (IAM) District W24. Officers were appointed to their respective posts at the time of the merger.

Prior to the merger, Elliott was the assistant DBR to Wilson at Woodworkers Lodge W1.

This is the first outright election since the district lodges joined together.

In other election results, Noel Willet of Woodworkers Local 130 was elected assistant directing business representative. He defeated the incumbent, Robert Petroff of Machinists Lodge 63.

Petroff, who serves as president of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, was DBR of Machinists District

Lodge 24 prior to the merger. He served as an assistant DBR following the merger. He will remain on staff assigned as a business representative.

Marv Abbott of Woodworkers Local 157 outpolled three other candidates for secretary treasurer. Chris Taylor of IAM Lodge 1005 had been serving in that post since the retirement in July of longtime secretary-treasurer Dan Sass. Taylor, Pat Maloney of IAM Lodge 63, and John Hall of Lodge 63, ran for the full-time job.

Elected as trustees were Les Auman of Woodworkers Local 536 and Mike Hicks Jr. of Woodworkers Local 98, (representing Wood); and John Kleiboeker of IAM Lodge 63

and Ray Simonis of IAM Lodge 1005, (representing Metal). Other candidates running were Tom Thede of Woodworkers Local 246; Aaron Arnold of Woodworkers Local 38, Tim Timmreck of Woodworkers Local 38, and Jeff Wagner of Woodworkers Local 130; and Frank Rouse of IAM Lodge 1005.

Caryn Kaufmann of Woodworkers Local 261, Larry Hendrickson of IAM Local 1432, and Kelly Zink of Woodworkers Local 536, were elected to one-year terms as auditors.

All officers and trustees were sworn in Dec. 6 by IAM Western Territory Grand Lodge Representative Kevin Cummings.

Terms of office are four years.

Its first large carhaul company in decades

Teamsters organize Seattle-based Selland Auto Transport

SEATTLE — The Teamsters Union won an election Dec. 16 at Selland Auto Transport. The bargaining unit covers 240 drivers and shop workers in Washington, Oregon, California, Montana and Utah.

The workers will be represented by Teamsters locals 174, 63, 315, 690, 223, 222, and 190.

"The workers at Selland have made history," Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa said in a press statement. "This victory is historic because it is the first large carhaul organizing victory in decades. The Teamsters have been organizing in freight and now with this carhaul victory at Selland, we are growing our core industries."

Headquartered in Seattle, Selland contracts with 11 foreign and domestic automobile manufacturers to move new cars, by truck, from ports and rail yards to auto dealerships in the Western United States. Drivers performing the work operate out of eight terminals:

Seattle, Renton, Kent, and Spokane, Washington; Portland, Oregon; San Bernardino and Richmond, California; Laurel, Montana; and Salt Lake City, Utah. Thirteen mechanics are in the bargaining unit.

Fairness, low pay and potential for improved benefits were the key issues in the campaign, said Teamsters Carhaul Division Director Kevin Moore.

"It feels great to be a Teamster," said Tim Vires, a driver in Portland. "Organizing with the Teamsters and negotiating a contract is the only way we can get the company to provide us with

what is important and not be able to take it away later."

The union calculates Selland workers earn about 70 percent of the industry average in overall compensation.

The owner challenged the bargaining unit, claiming 44 drivers were independent contractors. The National Labor Relations Board didn't buy it, and allowed the misclassified owner-operators to vote in the union election.

(Editor's Note: Press Associates Inc. Union News Service contributed to this report.)

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