

First union out of the box:

American Federation of Teachers endorses Clinton

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The executive council of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) voted overwhelmingly July 11 to endorse Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primary for president of the United States. The AFT is the first national union to endorse a candidate in the 2016 Democratic presidential primary.

“Hillary Clinton is a tested leader who shares our values, is supported by our members, and is prepared for a tough fight on behalf of students, families and

communities,” said AFT President Randi Weingarten.

The AFT’s endorsement comes a month after Clinton attended an executive council meeting in Washington, D.C. At that meeting, she said, “It is just dead wrong to make teachers the scapegoats for all of society’s problems. Where I come from, teachers are the solution. And I strongly believe that unions are part of the solution, too.”

The AFT said all potential and announced candidates were

invited to complete a questionnaire, and those who returned the questionnaire were invited to meet with the council. That included Democratic candidates Bernie Sanders and Martin O’Malley. No Republican candidates responded to the invitation.

The union said it polled its members twice, took multiple surveys, and conducted two telephone town halls before deciding which primary candidate to support. The top issues members raised were jobs and the

economy and public education.

“Seventy-nine percent of our members who vote in Democratic primaries said we should endorse a candidate. And by more than a 3-to-1 margin, these members said the AFT should endorse Clinton,” the union said in a press release.

The AFT’s 1.6 million members will be a powerful force for Clinton. Leading up to November 2016, AFT members are expected to make more than 1 million phone calls and knock on more than 500,000 doors.

AFT supported Clinton during her 2008 campaign for president as well.

UA gives \$1 million to Hillary PAC

The American Federation of Teachers was the first labor union to endorse Hillary Clinton in her current run for president, but not the first to contribute to her 2016 campaign. Two other unions have donated to Priorities USA Action, a super PAC that’s backing Clinton: The United Association of Plumbers and Fitters Political Action Committee contributed \$1 million on June 30, and the International Association of Fire Fighters contributed \$50,000 on May 5.

Wu named director of Portland Jobs with Justice

Portland Jobs with Justice has a new leader. In April, Diana Pei Wu became executive director of the faith-labor-community coalition, which is known for its frequent labor solidarity demonstrations.

Wu, 41, has a bachelor’s degree from Duke University, a master’s from Princeton, and doctorate from University of California, Berkeley. She also has a lengthy movement résumé and has been an activist since her teens.

Wu grew up in Stamford, Connecticut, as the daughter of Chinese immigrants, and at the age of 15 organized fellow Chinese students to march in protest of the 1989 massacre at Tiananmen Square.

In November 1999, she protested the World Trade Organization summit in the streets of Seattle—wearing a superhero costume as part of an ad hoc group called the Hall of Justice. That was her first real contact with the labor movement, and she calls it a formative moment.

In 2009, she was among dozens arrested in Emeryville, California, for blocking the street in front of a hotel where hotel workers with UNITE HERE were fighting for a living wage ordinance. As an instructor at Antioch College, she was part of an unsuccessful unionizing effort. As co-director of the activist training group Ruckus Society, she led trainings for the California Faculty Association, a union affiliated of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).



Diana Pei Wu

organizing director with the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO).

Wu also worked on affordable housing, immigrant rights, and many other causes. She moved to Portland in 2013 to be the

Now she’ll head one of the largest and oldest chapters of Jobs with Justice, overseeing a staff of three and a coalition made up of over 100 member faith, labor, and community organizations.

“As a queer woman of color I’m really thankful for the chance to lead an important coalition of faith labor and community,” Wu told the Labor Press.

Wu succeeds Karly Edwards,

who served as executive director from October 2013 until May 2014, when she left to become state director of the Oregon Working Families Party. And Edwards followed Margaret Butler, who helped found the group and then served as the group’s executive director for 16 years. Butler, a member of Communications Workers of America Local 7901, is now executive coordinator at AAUP-Oregon.



Providing auditing and accounting services to labor organizations and employee benefit plans since 1941

MKA MILLER KAPLAN ARASE LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS SINCE 1941

Jeffrey Goss / Catherine Gardner
971.255.0546
MillerKaplan.com