

PSU food service contract changes hands, union contract remains

At PSU, Salt and Straw ice cream and Stumptown Coffee will be served by AFSCME members

About 90 food service workers at Portland State University (PSU) continue to have a union — and a union contract — even though the company that employed them lost its contract with the university.

As of June 30, Aramark was out, and Chartwells was in —

providing food services at Smith Memorial Student Union and university dorms, as well as conferences and events at Viking Pavilion and other campus locations, including the University Place Hotel and Conference Center.

But with help from university officials, Oregon AFSCME representative Ross Kiely was able to persuade Chartwells to recognize the existing union and agree to the terms of its contract

with Aramark, which runs through the end of 2018. The contract provides for medical, dental, and vision coverage, paid vacation, free meals, and wages that range from \$0.25 to \$2.25 above minimum wage, plus basic union rights like progressive discipline, a grievance process, and seniority.

Chartwells also hired all the Aramark employees who wanted to continue on.

Baristas, cooks, cashiers, and other PSU food service workers have been represented by Oregon AFSCME since 2001, first at Aramark, then for two years under Sodexo, and at Aramark again for the last 10 years.

They make up AFSCME Local 1336. Local 1336 president Nicole Stroup is also a member of United Food & Commercial

Workers Local 555, through her work at St. Johns Fred Meyer.

Chartwells' contract with PSU will run a minimum of five years. The company is bringing popular new vendors to campus, including Salt and Straw, Cha Cha Cha, Smith Tea Maker, Stumptown Coffee and Roman Candle Baking. Thanks to the AFSCME contract, they'll be staffed by union members.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

State worker unions reach tentative agreement on 'lean budget' raises

Oregon AFSCME and the State of Oregon reached tentative agreement Aug. 9 on a new two-year contract covering just under 3,000 employees at 14 state agencies, including the Building Codes Division, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Oregon Liquor Control Commission, and others.

It's a tight-budget agreement, owing to a sizable state budget shortfall.

"It's a deal that meets the state's needs and our members' needs in a tough economic time," said Oregon AFSCME Executive Director Stacy Chamberlain. "Our members are taxpayers who live and invest in our communities too."

The agreement contains no wage increase for the first year, and a 1 percent increase the second year, taking effect June 15, 2018. It also ends the "PERS pickup," a decades-old agreement in which the employer has paid the statutorily-mandated employee pension contribution — 6 percent of gross pay. To make up for that concession, the contract provides for a 6.95 percent raise on Feb. 1, 2018. The new contract also maintains existing

health insurance on the same terms, as well as the existing schedule of step pay increases. And for the first time, the contract will require employers to take action against workplace bullying and "micro-aggressions" — small unintentional sexist or racist comments that contribute to offense in the workplace.

If members ratify it as expected, the contract will run through June 30, 2019.

Oregon AFSCME is the smaller of two large bargaining units of state employees. Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 503 represents the larger unit, with 19,000 workers. That unit is mid-way through a four-year agreement, except that wages and benefits for the final two years were negotiated this year. Local 503 reached tentative agreement July 25 on similar terms to AFSCME, except that they'll get a 1.85 percent increase in June 2018. The state also agreed to add a \$15 an hour wage floor to the SEIU contract, which will result in raises for several hundred state office workers and janitors. SEIU members agreed to give up their PERS pick-up two years ago.

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