



QUFA

Queen's University Faculty Association

March 24, 2010

Daniel Woolf
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Queen's University

Dear Principal Woolf,

The Queen's University Faculty Association (QUFA) welcomes the news that Queen's staff have applied for their representation vote with the United Steelworkers (USW). Freedom of association and unionization are fundamental human rights, protected by Canada's Charter of Rights and by Ontario's Labour Relations Act, 1995. Staff deserve an equal seat at the table in order to advance and protect their interests. With the security of collective bargaining rights and representation, staff will be able to provide candid, thoughtful consultation as we all work to make Queen's a better university in this time of change and challenge. In university staff collective bargaining across Ontario we have seen that staff unions are effective at arriving at agreements in an orderly and successful manner.

QUFA calls on the Administration to adopt a truly neutral stance in this matter and to fully respect the right of our staff colleagues to make their own decisions on their future representation. Queen's staff should be treated as respected members of the university community whose right to self-determination is supported by all members of the Queen's community.

During the staff union campaign, the Administration has not treated staff the same way that they treated other Queen's employee groups when those groups organized. For example, the Administration prohibited staff campaign information meetings in buildings under its control, thereby limiting such meetings to the John Deutsch University Centre. The Human Resources website has a staff-specific 'Frequently Asked Questions' which carries repeated references to strikes, an inaccurate portrayal of the cost of dues and a broad intimation that staff are better off without union membership and collective bargaining rights. We note that during the recent successful campaign by Queen's teaching assistants and teaching fellows to be represented by Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Administration limited its communication with affected employees to factual information about the vote location and time and an encouragement for affected employees to take part in that vote. We call on the Administration to treat Queen's staff in an equivalent manner and to remove all misleading or incorrect information from the Human Resources website. Staff are valued members of the Queen's community who deserve equal treatment. Failure to do so is inconsistent with our university's core values.

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Finally, QUFA encourages the Administration to work in a professional, consensus-based manner with the USW as the Labour Board sets up the vote and during the post vote period.

The USW has a well-known history of respectful, productive collective bargaining relationships with other Ontario universities. We trust that the Administration will choose to lay the foundation for an effective and professional future relationship by the manner in which it conducts itself with respect to staff's right to choose union membership.

Sincerely,



Cathy Christie QUFA President
on behalf of the QUFA executive

cc
Queen's Staff Union Campaign
QUFA Members

