

## AAUP Alert



### A message from your co-presidents

As we close the chapter on 2021, we want to thank all our AAUP Colorado Conference members for their support and persistence as higher education advocates, even as the pandemic endures and complicates face-to-face gatherings and associational life. Despite the hurdles, our Conference has a number of accomplishments to claim, including our successful mini-Summer Institute in Breckenridge this summer — kudos to Caprice Lawless and colleagues at Colorado Mountain College for pulling this together. The Conference also wrote letters defending due process for faculty and challenging administrative decisions to lay off contingent faculty. Members penned Op-Eds detailing the plight of community college instructors and criticizing affronts to shared governance and academic freedom. We were also pleased to see new and revived AAUP chapters coalesce at Fort Lewis College, the University of Northern Colorado, Regis University and, most recently, Naropa University.



As 2022 dawns, we are excited to join the battle for faculty unionization rights in Colorado. The prospect of passing into law a public employees collective bargaining bill introduced in the General Assembly in January 2022 is a potential game-changer for higher education in Colorado. The AAUP and the American Federation of Teachers have linked arms for this important **battle**.

Pictured at left is a snapshot of just a few of the organizers as they headed into the Colorado State Capitol on Jan. 14 to promote the legislation. At far left is Sara Fitouri, executive director of bargaining for the Colorado Education Association. In the center is Umesh Pakalapati, National Organizer for this campaign with the American Federation of Teachers, and beside him, Elizabet

Garcia Hernandez with Powermap Consulting. They, along with AAUP National Organizer Ellen Kress (not pictured), many from the AAUP Colorado Conference and AFT Colorado, have been working to mobilize local members on behalf of the bill. **The Conference has received** financial support from AAUP national to assist chapters in mobilizing faculty support for this important year for faculty rights in Colorado. We encourage all our members to learn more about this bill and join the fight to strengthen faculty rights in Colorado.

In solidarity,  
Steve Mumme and Caprice Lawless  
Co-Presidents, Colorado Conference

### ***New for the 2022 Session***

## **Esgar, Fenberg sponsor Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act**

It is now official!  
With House  
Majority Leader,  
Daneya Esgar (D-  
Pueblo) as lead  
sponsor, and Senate  
Majority Leader  
Steve Fenberg (D-  
Boulder) as co-  
sponsor a public  
employee collective  
bargaining bill will  
be introduced in the  
Colorado General



Assembly shortly after the Session convenes on Jan. 12, 2022. As drafted, the bill would:

**A) Recognize the rights of public employees at the county, city, municipality, school district, library district, special district, public colleges and universities,\*\* local government, judicial, or political subdivision of local government to:**

- Organize, form, join, or assist an employee organization (or refrain from doing so);
- Be recognized as a union and establish the union as exclusive representative;
- Be represented and negotiate collectively or express a grievance through their exclusive representative.

\*\*employees of public colleges and universities include workers of all stripes:  
faculty, adjunct, grad workers, and staff.

**B) Require the public employer to:**

- Remain neutral at all times if employees choose to form a union and shall not discriminate or retaliate against any employee as they seek to organize a union;
- Allow the employee's exclusive representative access to employees in the workplace for the purposes of membership recruitment;
- Make payroll deductions to the exclusive representative as authorized by the

employee;

- Provide the exclusive representative with the contact information on file for the covered employees.

**C) Require the exclusive representative and employer to:**

- Bargain collectively in good faith;
- To negotiate the collective bargaining agreement for a term of 12-36 months and must initiate negotiations within a specified time frame;
- To seek arbitration if an impasse is reached.

These measures fundamentally alter the terms of the current Colorado Labor Peace Act that makes employers' consent to collectively bargain entirely discretionary.

## **What can faculty do to support the bill?**

The AAUP-AFT partnership encourages faculty of all types and ranks to **contact your local senators and representatives and let them know you support the bill**. Personal, face-to-face encounters work best, followed by phone calls, letters, and emails. Submit letters detailing your personal experience and reasons for supporting a unionization option in Colorado.

Once the bill is introduced (late Jan. 2022), organizers encourage AAUP Colorado Conference chapters to host faculty social gatherings to discuss the bill and to reach out to other faculty to support the bill.

Use **this link** to type your address (and/or the address of your campus) to find the contact information for your local lawmaker:

<https://leg.colorado.gov/find-my-legislator>



## **Big bill, big news, big fight, big reason to write that letter:**

[The Colorado Capitol's next big labor fight: Whether to let local public workers unionize](#)  
(*Colorado Sun*, Jan. 20, 2022)

[Colorado Democrats eye sweeping new union rights for more than 250,000 public sector workers](#)  
(*The Denver Post*, Dec. 26, 2021)

## **Sample to send in support of the 2022 Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act**

We know you are swamped with the semester start, taxes, and chapter business for the new year. With that in mind, here is a sample letter you can send directly to your state representatives and/or Gov. Polis in support of the bill. At the time of this writing the bill has not

yet been introduced so we do not have a bill number to include in this newsletter or in this letter template.

Dear [Gov. Polis or your state lawmaker]

Higher education and public workers make Colorado work, but Colorado isn't working for higher ed and public workers. Under current Colorado law, most higher education and public workers do not have the right to a seat at the table with their employers. However, a bill from Majority Leaders Daneya Esgar and Steve Fenberg would change that by expanding collective bargaining rights to public workers. Collective bargaining empowers workers to have a real say in their workplace and about their own working conditions. Empowering higher education and all public workers enhances our public good.

## AAUP National sends Colo. Conf. development grant

AAUP national has given the Colorado Conference a grant in support of this bill. If your chapter needs funding (up to \$300) to support a gathering, please contact Caprice Lawless or Steve Mumme with your request. Also, as part of this grant, AAUP has a unique and much-needed opportunity for co-president Caprice Lawless to meet with chapter leaders to discuss the 2022 Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act and other issues chapters may wish to bring to the attention of the Colorado Conference. She will be reaching out to chapter leaders accordingly as she plans her visits. If you wish to schedule a visit, contact us:

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## AAUP Strong for Campus Equity Week 2021



The AAUP Chapters at Front Range Community College and Community College of Denver used guerilla marketing techniques once again to spread the word about adjunct working conditions among peers and students during Campus Equity Week (CEW), Oct. 25-29, 2021. New for CEW 21 were stickers inviting students, neighbors, baristas, and anyone adjuncts met that week to inquire what, exactly is the adjunct discount? They then learned, from the adjunct, that it is the low-wage labor of the adjunct they were talking to that IS the adjunct discount!

Also new this year was an online petition supporters could sign, asking the CCCS governing board to send to adjuncts a significant pay raise. A poster depicting what the board's

much-ballyhooed, phased-in-over-five-years 20% pay raise would look like, up close, for CCCS adjunct faculty whose wages, averaging \$2,500/per 3-credit-hour-course, are already way below the poverty line. The poster, [covered in the Academe blog](#), depicts what amounts to a weekly cup-of-coffee pay raise, a one-shoe-pay raise, or perhaps a loaf-of-bread-pay raise. AAUP members also distributed bookmarks and packages of Vitamin AAUP.

## **CU Boulder chapter advocates for faculty through letter-writing**

The CU Boulder chapter continues to champion the due process rights of all faculty, to protect tenure from disintegration, and to try to help all faculty who seek their assistance. Most of that work goes on behind the scenes, when faculty reach out to Chapter President Marki LeCompte or Conference Vice President Don Eron for advice and/or requesting a letter written to a dean or administrator to calm the waters. Occasionally, the letters must be made public to be effective. Such was the case in February 2021, when Don Eron [wrote a letter on behalf of the Conference in support of John Eastman](#). The University of Colorado had attempted to suspend Eastman for his political activities.



## **CU Colorado Springs chapter is active**

“Boasting the largest membership in the state of Colorado, the AAUP chapter at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs consistently seeks to fight for the rights of our faculty,” writes UCCS Chapter President Jeffrey Scholes. “While our attention is fixed on the rights of all faculty, we specifically focus on the plight of non-tenured faculty members at our institution. Our chapter argued for, and won, a \$10,000 increase in salary for full-time instructors across the board several years ago, for instance, and is continuing to press administration to better the situation for non-tenure faculty. In sum, the AAUP chapter at UCCS is active, vibrant, and attentive.”

## Maximum results from our mountain Mini-Innie

We in the Colorado Conference asked ourselves a few questions as the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine began to lift. Could we create a midsummer event requiring just a few hundred miles of driving that would bring together AAUP members from half a dozen cities? Could we link up, via satellite, to the AAUP president so members who live in tiny mountain villages could meet her? Could we make the AAUP *Redbook* the star of our event to promote its study and usage, especially among our newest members? Could we get AAUP's brainy Hans-Joerge Tiede to explain the book to us from his office in Washington D.C.? Could we get infusions of Vitamin AAUP from former Committee A member and fierce faculty defender Don Eron? Could he teach us how to use the *Redbook* to defend adjunct faculty? Could we use our brief time together to hatch a failproof plan for our forthcoming shared governance symposium? Could we introduce attendees to the idea of writing and disseminating press releases? Could we who live in Colorado's foothills catch up with our far-flung colleagues on the other side of the Continental Divide about their work on behalf of faculty?



Could we do all of this for 25 people, on a budget of \$2,500, including overnight lodging for many of them, meeting room rental, two breakfasts for 25, two lunches for 25, an evening beer-and-pizza party for 25, the printing of 60 workbooks for the meetings, and make it all happen on a July weekend in the picturesque, resort destination of Summit County, Colorado?

Colorado ends in the word “do,” so of course our Conference accomplished this by pulling together an event modeled on the fantastic AAUP Summer Institute. Our shortened, miniature iteration of the national event is a one-and-a-half-day gathering we call the Mini Innie. Ours brought together faculty members from the Colorado Mountain College, the Community College of Denver, Front Range Community College, the University of Colorado at Boulder, Colorado State University, and the University of Denver. The ideas presented and discussed were the full-size AAUP ones, but packaged for delivery in small, to-go containers comprising several carpool rides in the mountains, one two-hour Zoom, two short workshops, two presentations, four generous meeting-room buffets, an overnight stay in a tiny hotel for a dozen or so members, one library meeting room, and one *al fresco* pizza-and-beer dinner overlooking a mountain valley. (That’s us, pictured above, enjoying the pizza and the pizzaz of Summit county scenery after a long day of learning about AAUP principles.)



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