



Hello colleagues,

As you may have heard, approximately 2,200 UA staff will soon vote on whether to unionize with United Auto Workers (UAW) under the name Coalition of Alaska University Staff for Equity (CAUSE). Eligible staff will start voting this week—on Wednesday, March 18, 2026—through Tuesday, March 31, 2026. UNAC's leadership wholeheartedly supports this effort for the following reasons:

- UA leadership consistently tells UNAC negotiation teams that they cannot give us the raises we deserve because they would also have to give those raises to non-union staff. With a staff union, we would no longer be unofficially negotiating on behalf of 2,200 staff.
- After CAUSE has ratified their first CBA, the legislature would be required to fund staff's annual raises, ending the recent UA practice of dipping into internal resources, such as non-CBA-protected faculty development money, to fund staff raises.
- CAUSE would negotiate for their own raises with UA management, giving UNAC increased leverage when it is our turn to negotiate in 2027.
- A new union the size of CAUSE would force changes in UA managements' negotiation tactics, improving the negotiation conditions for each UA bargaining unit, including UNAC.
- Different unions within a workplace can more effectively represent their employee groups, ensuring that the unique needs of various job roles are met more effectively than a single, one-size-fits-all union.
- CAUSE would get three seats to match the other unions' representation on JHCC, giving UA's unions more leverage in discussions about UA's health plan.
- The CAUSE bargaining unit would create UA's 5th bargaining unit and vastly increase the density of unionized UA employees, with the result of improving each units' negotiation strength as well as the ability to work together for the greater good.
- Higher union density in any workplace generally produces [statistically significant](#) workplace improvements and gives employees official avenues for working together.

For these reasons, and for solidarity with the staff who help us make UA successful in its mission, UNAC's leadership supports the formation of a new staff union. UNAC, CAUSE, and UA's other unions would be able to work together with more power to improve job security, compensation, and job satisfaction across the UA system. Therefore, with the exception of staff you directly supervise, *we hope you will encourage UA staff to vote YES to form their union.*

To show your support for CAUSE, consider filling out their “pic & quote” form to write a brief statement of why you support UA staff unionization efforts. These will be published on the [CAUSE website](#).

In solidarity,  
Jill A. Dumesnil, PhD  
President, United Academics AAUP/AFT Local 4996  
Professor of Mathematics  
University of Alaska Southeast



## Executive Board and Staff Contacts

**President - Jill Dumesnil, PhD**  
jill.dumesnil@unac4996ak.com

**Treasurer - Sharon Chamard, PhD**  
sharon.chamard@unac4996ak.com

**Secretary - Richie Berndt, MSML**  
richie.berndt@unac4996ak.com

**UAA Organizational VP - Ryan Harrod, PhD**  
ryan.harrod@unac4996ak.com

**UAS Organizational VP - Andrea Dewees, PhD**  
andrea.dewees@unac4996ak.com

**UAF Organizational VP - Ingrid Johnson, PhD**  
ingrid.johnson@unac4996ak.com

**Extended Sites Organizational VP - Cindy Trussell, PhD**  
cindy.trussell@unac4996ak.com

**Contract Manager - Melanie Arthur, PhD**  
melanie.arthur@unac4996ak.com

**Organizing Manager - Kate Quick, MFA**  
kate.quick@unac4996ak.com

**United Academics Local #4996 (UNAC)** is the bargaining unit that represents all post docs, non-tenure track (term), tenure track, and tenured faculty at the University of Alaska. UNAC is affiliated with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) as well as the Alaska Public Employee Association (APEA) and Alaska AFL-CIO.

United Academics AAUP/AFT | P.O. Box 755895 | Fairbanks, AK 99775-5895 US

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