

## SIU Edwardsville Faculty Association Ratifies First Comprehensive Contract



It took more than two and a half years for this union to win a comprehensive union contract, but the effort was worth the wait – and the blood, sweat and tears.

“With this historic, first comprehensive union contract now in place, the SIUE Faculty Association and the SIUE administration start a new chapter of cooperation, with both parties beginning to implement new, mutually agreed-upon policies,” said FA President **Kim Archer**, professor of music. “During the next year, the college, schools and their respective departments will be updating operating papers and ways of doing business to align with the contract.”

Bargaining preparation began in December 2016 as soon as the state certified the SIUE Faculty Association-IEA/NEA as exclusive rep for 400-plus tenure-line faculty. Negotiations began in earnest in March 2017 and by December, an interim agreement was reached giving the new bargaining unit the same raises granted non-represented employees – but only after an intensive public shaming of a university seeking to punish its faculty for organizing. The interim pact also included a grievance procedure with binding arbitration, maintenance of standards, a free hand for the employer to make counteroffers to individual faculty, and numerous other rights and benefits.

A year and half later, a comprehensive agreement was delivered through hard bargaining and skillful mediation. But it took more: colorful faculty demonstrations, compelling testimony at board meetings and legislative hearings, political support from area lawmakers, and a coordinated media campaign. All kept the struggle for equity and professional respect at this public university in the public eye. The four year contract retroactive to July 1, 2018 (through June of 2022), reinforces faculty governance and also starts a climb back toward purchasing power diminished over decades.

“Coming together on a first contract can present many challenges,” said Kevin Dorsey, SIU System interim president. “I want to congratulate the administration and the faculty association at SIUE for finding common ground as they have worked to strengthen the university, and provide the best opportunities for our faculty and ultimately our students.”

The contract applies to the tenured and tenure-track faculty in the Universities Library and Information Services, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Schools of Business, Engineering, Nursing, and Education, Health and Human Behavior.

Some highlights:

- Total Faculty Salary Increases of \$4.77 million (\$3.22 million ATB / \$1.2 million equity / \$350,000 compression)
- Early interim contract giving faculty 2+2% ATB raises for the two years preceding comprehensive contract
- Salary minima by rank \$50K/60K/70K for contract's first year
- Permanent \$50K floor for new hires
- Full compensation for overload coursework and contact hours
- All non-political Association activities can be counted toward service component

Founded in 1853, the IEA represents more than 135,000 Illinois public education faculty and staff, from pre-K through graduate programs, as well as students preparing to become teachers.

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