

May 2015

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The AFA

What is the AFA? The AFA is *your* union, protecting and fighting for the rights of all adjuncts covered under the bargaining agreement between the college and the AFA (anyone teaching at least six LHE's in any three previous terms).

A Victory for One of Our Members

You may remember adjunct English teacher Lisa Bassett speaking at our Fall membership meeting, where she outlined her efforts to get the pension due her at retirement. Having taught at Oakton for five years, she retired with a pension-or so she thought. This is when the issue of how Oakton reports dates of service to SURS initially came up. Because of how dates are reported, Lisa learned that in SURS's eyes, she was just short of a pension. However, a year of hard work on her part paid off.

Last week, she learned that she has permission to retire – with a pension. Oakton has agreed to revise her service dates and given her credit for days she worked by attending mandatory faculty meetings during orientation week. While this still needs to be processed through SURS, the end – and Lisa's retirement with a pension – is in sight. The lesson here? Perseverance pays off. Oakton noted that this is an “unprecedented” agreement, meaning that it isn't about to rewrite all service dates for everyone. But Lisa kept at it, and they *did* it.

April Board of Trustees Meeting



During the public comments, a Speech and Drama student, Maliha Iqbal, read a poem about the potential loss of the annuitants. Five adjuncts attended the April Board of Trustees meeting.

What's going on?

Both the administration side and the AFA side of the arbitration involving Chet Kulis have

submitted briefs. The arbitrator's decision is expected within the next few weeks. When it is received, the arbitration on behalf of the rest of the annuitants is ready to be filed.

The administration has agreed to Demand to Bargain. Parties have met four times; many ideas have been floated, primarily by the AFA union. None have been agreed to, and no counter-proposals have been made. The AFA agreed to one concession – an agreement not to hire an annuitant working at another SURS institution. Nothing has been offered in return. The administration has refused to comply with the union's cease and desist demand.

As you can see, much has been done – an arbitration filed, briefs written, letters sent, meetings attended, grievances filed... and what has happened? The AFA board keeps chipping away at the very unresponsive administrative front. The memberships' input and *offer to help* would be welcomed.

Separately from the union's efforts, several annuitants have also filed through the Illinois Department of Human Rights citing age discrimination. In response, the administration's brief noted that the annuitants are not being “discharged” but “discontinued.” Comforting.