Why is MEA membership important for Higher Education?

The Northwestern Michigan College Story

MEA is the strongest professional labor union for colleges and universities in Michigan. The advantages of your membership run deep into your higher education profession.

Recently, the Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) faculty chose to join MEA for many reasons: the advantage of having a local MEA office to call when help is needed; a trained and knowledgeable UniServ director to assist them with their issues; legal assistance to challenge unfair practices; access to research and experts on higher education issues; and the peace of mind that comes with knowing they are not alone.

“As faculty, we are embedded in the school and we are the closest people to the students. We wanted a seat at the table so that we could contribute our collective wisdom to the success of the education institution that we care so much about,” said Bronwyn Jones, a 27-year NMC English faculty member.

Mella McCormick teaches philosophy at NMC and said, “My union promotes professional integrity and respect and that’s worth the dues I pay. It’s my insurance that I hope I never have to use, but it’s comforting to know that it’s there. As a result, the College is realizing that they have to take us seriously and MEA has my back.”

Contract maintenance and enforcement

Your working conditions are important: compensation for all the preparation and planning that goes into teaching your classes; professional development and training to perform your job; and pay for the hours you work. If the employer turns a deaf ear, you have no recourse unless you have a union and a place at the table. Being an MEA member gives you that voice in making decisions which impact you and your students.

“The faculty stuck together in their beliefs that some actions by the administration are detrimental to the health of the institution,” said Jerry Dobek, who teaches astrophysics at NMC.

Good faith bargaining

To enforce management’s obligation to bargain in good faith, MEA brings the resources you need. MEA provides research specific to higher education issues, staff, legal counsel when necessary, and the training you need to get a professional contract.

“Power implies responsibility. For us, this isn’t about power; it’s about shared control. We know it’s better we hang together or we’ll hang. There’s power in a team and that’s what we are,” said Brandon Everest, a sociology professor at NMC.

MEA
Michigan Education Association

To learn more about the benefits of MEA membership, visit www.mea.org.