

## A Brief History of AFUM

In Maine, collective bargaining in the state university system is organized into units: The Associated Faculties of the Universities of Maine (AFUM) represents faculty; Universities of Maine Professional Staff Association (UMPSA) represents professional staff; Associated C.O.L.T. Staff of the Universities of Maine (ACSUM) represents clerical, office, laboratory and technical unit; Teamsters represent police and service and maintenance; and the Part Time Faculty Association (PATFA) affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers Local #4593 AFT-Maine, AFL-CIO represents part time faculty. For the purposes of this essay I will only focus on AFUM.

The Associated Faculties of the Universities of Maine (AFUM) was established in 1976 when the University of Maine System Labor Relations Act was passed. The statute (Title 26 MRSA chapter 12) specifies:

### §1021. Purpose <sup>1</sup>

It is declared to be the public policy of this State and it is the purpose of this chapter to promote the improvement of the relationship between public employers and their employees by providing a uniform basis for recognizing the right of the University of Maine System employees, Maine Maritime Academy employees and community college employees to join labor organizations of their own choosing and to be represented by such organizations in collective bargaining for terms and conditions of employment. [1989, c. 443, §60 (AMD); 2003, c. 20, Pt. OO, §2 (AMD); 2003, c. 20, Pt. OO, §4 (AFF).]

Once the University of Maine Labor Relations Act passed, AFUM election for representation passed in May of 1978 and unit determination was finalized in August of 1978. The first AFUM contract was negotiated with the University of Maine system in 1979. The original issues that drove collective bargaining included extremely low pay, lack of due process and arbitrarily awarded raises.

AFUM negotiates on behalf of all full time faculty in the University of Maine System. The system is composed of seven campuses: (in order from south to north) The University of Southern Maine (USM); The University of Maine Augusta (UMA); The University of Maine Farmington (UMF); The University of Maine (UM – located in Orono); The University of Maine Machias (UMM); The University of Maine Presque Isle (UMPI); and The University of Maine Fort Kent (UMFK). The bargaining unit also includes The University of Maine Cooperative Extension (UMCE) with sites across the state.

Each campus has a chapter president, vice president, secretary treasurer and executive council that advises the president. Each campus also provides a negotiating representative for collective bargaining

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/26/title26ch12sec0.html>

with the system at the state level. Collectively, the local has a statewide president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and executive council. The statewide executive council is made up of the campus AFUM presidents and one additional member from each campus.

AFUM is affiliated with the National Education Association (NEA) both directly through delegates sent to the Representative Assembly and via the Maine Education Association (MEA). AFUM participates in the governance of the MEA with a Board of Directors Representative and the Representative Assembly. AFUM also receives service support from the MEA in the form of a Uniserve Director. The support of the Uniserve Director is conditional on maintaining a minimum of 12 dues paying members.