

Brookdale Adjunct Faculty Chapter

of the United Adjunct Faculty of NJ AFT Local 2222

SEPTEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER



September always brings a mix of emotions, but this one starts with a bang! Our Union signed its first contract and we, the college, and our students will all benefit! See below for details. “We’re not invisible anymore” had become one of our mottos. Perhaps we should add “You are not alone anymore.” Our Union is alive and well!

Jim, Karen, and Joan

What’s in a Name?

BAFC. BCCAFF. BCCCUAF2222! We may be a legal entity now, but we’ve had something of an identity crisis. Various names for our union have been used through its evolution to legitimacy over the past five years. Now that we’ve finally arrived, it’s time to make it official: we’re sticking with the **Brookdale Adjunct Faculty Chapter** of the United Adjunct Faculty of New Jersey, American Federation of Teachers Local 2222. **BAFC** for short!

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action update

August 23, 2022 Board of Trustees meeting

A group of adjunct professors and union leaders gathered at BCC's Freehold campus last Tuesday evening to "encourage" and witness the BOT's vote on the contract, which was briefly delayed for a closed session discussion. Karen Strickland got in a word prior regarding our titles as Adjunct Professors/Faculty (which the press picked up on, below), and about an hour later, Jim addressed the Board thanking them for ratifying the contract and thanking all the voices that worked together to make the union possible.

Brookdale, adjunct professors agree

First union contract is now a reality

Susanne Cervenka
Asbury Park Press
USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW JERSEY

MIDDLETOWN - Brookdale Community College reached a deal with its part-time faculty that gives the educators the higher pay they demanded while also fulfilling what students have said is a key need: More facetime with their professors.

Leaders of Monmouth County's community college this week ratified the first contract with the Brookdale Adjunct Faculty Chapter of the United Adjunct Faculty of New Jersey, which also approved the deal with a 74-1 vote last week.

"It was a perfect situation where we able to get something the students were asking for and also the extra pay the adjuncts wanted," Brookdale President David Stout said. "It was good for our students and good for adjuncts."

Leaders of the adjunct union said the first contract made its members feel like they are a stronger part of Brookdale overall.

"We are not invisible anymore," said Joan Carroll, an adjunct math professor who served on the bargaining committee with fellow adjunct faculty members Jim Schmitt, who teaches math, and Karen Strickland, who teaches English.

Adjunct faculty are part-time employees who teach courses at colleges and universities on a contract basis versus the full-time faculty, who earn a set salary. Adjunct staff also don't earn benefits like health care, jury duty pay or bereavement leave that full-time faculty get.

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The contract is a six-year deal retroactive to July 1, 2019, and will run through the 2024-25 academic year. The deal hit on key issues for the adjunct staff: higher pay in a paycheck that

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Recap of What We've Gained

Our [first negotiated contract](#) comes with a significant multi-year pay bump, a stipend for office hours, and the ability to negotiate a separate contract. We now have a voice in the College and a means of improving working conditions and addressing concerns about how adjunct professors are treated. BCC is the eleventh community college in NJ to be unionized under AFT. Membership in AFT-NJ Local 2222 also comes with many legal and other benefits.

Next Steps

The bylaws will be presented to our membership for a vote to approve. New officers will need to be elected. Information about benefits will be disseminated and new members welcomed. A website with shared resources for AP's will be created. And it is never too soon to consider our needs as we work towards our next contract in 2025.

news

In Memoriam

Most of you have heard that longtime BCC adjunct professor and BAFC secretary/treasurer Richard Jesmajian passed away suddenly on August 20. Rich has been at the forefront of our collective bargaining efforts since they began. We're dedicating this issue's **spotlight** to Rich, below.

Asbury Park Press Covers Historic BOT Vote

We got the top of print page 3 and a big online headline in a Press article on the August 23 Board of Trustees vote. They neatly summarized our situation and history, and we appreciate the coverage by our local paper. Let's clear up one statement: we *already* meet with students

outside of class, to support them in any way possible, whether live or virtually. This contract doesn't force us to nor did it need to; it recognizes the fact by paying us for some of that time!
<https://www.app.com/story/news/education/2022/08/26/brookdale-community-college-nj-settles-adjuncts-union-fight/65419720007/>

upcoming events

AP Gatherings Continue

The day before the semester's start, about a dozen BCC adjunct professors took time to celebrate our success, kick off the school year, and enjoy fellowship at **BellWorks** in Holmdel with drinks and informal chatter about our work, lives, and anything else that arose. After lively conversation, our consensus is we need to plan another gathering soon!



Watch for a date in mid-October to return to the lovely Bar Bella rooftop at BellWorks for possibly one last time this season.

adjunct professor spotlight



*In memory of our beloved colleague **Richard Jesmajian***

Richard, known as Rick, Rich, Dick, or Richard, was a long time adjunct professor in the computer science department and a quiet but strong influence in our early Union meetings. He brought a unique experience to the college after working 25 years for AT&T, Bell South, and Bell Labs.

Rich's knowledge and intelligence greatly benefited BAFC as he served as its first treasurer. Joan remembers him chuckling at our jokes but keeping our meetings moving. We will all miss him.

His full obituary can be read at:

https://www.thompsonmemorial.net/obituaries/1893-richard-w-jesmajian&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1662655683927285&usg=AOvVaw0CE1rGL6zvOxhXU_4J80Gl

Acting President: Joan Carroll
Acting Vice President: James Schmitt
More info soon at <http://bccaff.nj.aft.org>