

Transcription of VP for Membership & Organizing Interview with Courtney Bailey

Tina Burdsall: I want to introduce Courtney Bailey. Courtney can you please introduce yourself and what role you have at PSU-AAUP?

Courtney Bailey: Yeah so I'm the vice president of membership and organizing for our Union and I'm also an academic professional at PSU. I serve as a career counselor in the University career center.

Tina: How long have you been in your role at PSU-AAUP?

Courtney: In this current role, I'm coming up on 2 years so it's close to the end of my term but I've served in other roles on the Executive Council, [I've been a] councilor-at-large; I've long been a member of the organizing committee and a unit representative as well.

Tina: Can you tell us a little bit about what your VP role is and what it entails?

Courtney: Yeah absolutely. So the main part of my role is to lead the organizing committee and the Unit Representatives across our Union. So the organizing committee – we work to plan events and actions that will help support the efforts at the bargaining table when we're bargaining with Administration and also any issue campaigns that come up that our members are really concerned about. So we're sort of the action-oriented wing of our Union. We really focus on trying to get members engaged and involved in what's happening in our Union and help encourage a network of communication so that people know what's happening within our Union. My role is also to encourage membership, so any new employees, I might meet with them and so my Unit Reps or Organizing committee members meet with new employees to try to encourage them to join our union and maintain our high membership levels.

Tina: Great, thank you. Can you think about something that may be important for someone who may think about running for this position?

Courtney: Yeah I think one my big learning moments before I got involved in the Executive Council was, I used to think that if I had an issue I would just send it to the Executive Council or the leadership team, and they would take care of it or help me navigate that, and that is true, but while the Executive Council does lead our organization, we are really all part of AAUP. AAUP is not just the leadership team. It's everyone. Every member. And our power as an organization really comes from our Collective voice and that's really the heart of organizing and what this role is because it's about getting members engaged in our Collective voice and action so that we can really show that we're a really powerful Union together, because that's how we make wins at the bargaining table and on issues that come up.

Tina: Wonderful. Thank you. So one last question: What is one thing you really enjoyed about your role?

Courtney: I think probably a lot of people will say this too, but the best part of this role for me is getting to meet so many people that I wouldn't normally get to interact with. I came from a really small institution prior to coming to PSU and I know how isolating PSU can feel because it's so large, but I get to work with faculty that I wouldn't normally meet, with academic professionals that are in other areas of the University, and it's just really awesome to learn about their roles and to work together on issues, and know that I'm not alone when I'm upset or angry about something that's happening. There's a lot of other people who have had similar experiences and being able to turn that really great community that we've built into a lot of great collective action and power.

Tina: Great! Thank you so much Courtney.

Courtney: Thank you.