

WIU Candidate Statements

Position: WIU Chapter President

Candidate Name: Patrick McGinty

I intend to forge a course for the WIU Chapter of the UPI that seeks to promote a culture of mutual assistance, cooperation, and pursuit of the common good. As I call on our membership to promote a union culture of mutual assistance in securing, protecting, and defending the rights of our members, I will extend that same invitation to the WIU administration. Providing opportunities for labor and management to work together on shared issues – such as lobbying together for increased state funding for higher education – helps to improve labor-management relations as it supposes some degree of administrative retreat from staunchly anti-labor, anti-union sentiment at the bargaining table. I also believe these actions and invitations are key to countering the devaluation of our labor as it relates to the pursuit of the mission and values of WIU and serving the needs, interests, and welfare of our students.

Position: Vice President

Candidate Name: Julie Brines

Thank you for this opportunity to run as the vice president of the UPI at Western Illinois University. My name is Julie Brines and I am currently the ASP member at large on the UPI executive board. In my time on the board, I have served on the bargaining team for various negotiations, met with administration on issues pertaining to union business, and arranged meetings to represent the interests of my fellow academic support professionals. Before I was elected to that position, I served as the area representative for the University Advising and Academic Support Center. I have worked at Western since 2008 as an academic advisor and also taught as an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Administration; School of Law Enforcement and Justice Administration; and College Student Personnel program. I am eager to continue my advocacy with the UPI.

Position: WIU Chapter Secretary

Candidate Name: William Thompson

After twice serving as President of the WIU Chapter, it was time for me to step down, but I did not want to step out entirely. As Chapter Secretary I will be able to continue to contribute my voice and to help guide the union. I am especially interested in helping faculty and staff meet any challenges to thriving they encounter in the workplace. I want to continue to make WIU a better place to work, better for our members, for the students, for the community.

Position: WIU Executive Board

Candidate Name: P.K. Babu

I am a professor at the Department of Physics, and I have been teaching at WIU since 2008. I served as a member of the House of Delegates from 2018 and a member of the UPI Executive Board for the last two years. I actively participated in several negotiations during this period. I was a member of the 3-member UPI team that negotiated with the administration about a salary reopeners in Fall 2019. Last year, I served in the UPI state-wide team that formulated the Covid-19 lab teaching protocols. In Summer 2020, I was a member of the UPI bargaining team that negotiated with WIU administration to produce the MOU for Covid-19 working conditions. I would like to continue serving as a member of the UPI Executive Board.

Position: WIU Unit A Executive Board

Candidate Name: Merrill Cole

In the past two years as a member of the UPI Executive board, I have organized meetings with the Black Student Association and state legislators. I have also been an observer and advisor to contract negotiations. Over the past several years, I helped organize UPI rallies, recorded UPI members, held discussions with members about the union, strawpolled members on readiness to strike, attended statewide UPI meetings, and helped administer the UPI Local 4100 WIU Facebook page. I would like to continue to serve UPI as a member of the Executive Board. I am committed to upholding

the rights of all university workers, and I am a strong advocate of diversity, inclusion, equity, and social justice.

Position: WIU Unit A Executive Board

Candidate Name: Melissa Stinnett

I am running for Unit A, At Large member of the Chapter Executive Board. I believe in the work of UPI and how it works to advocate for faculty. As a faculty member in the School of Education, I would like to represent my colleagues as well as to provide information to those in the School of Education.

Position: WIU Unit A Executive Board

Candidate Name: Mark Bernards

No statement available.

Position: WIU House of Delegates

Candidate Name: Chris Jacques

I have always been inspired by the role that the Local chapter plays in helping with matters related to collective bargaining over wages/benefits, ensuring fair working conditions, and representing faculty and staff in challenges they encounter in disputes with upper-level administrators. I have been especially active with Local chapter members during the past several months in addressing workplace challenges and have been impressed by their professionalism and dedication to me and other active members. Service to the Local chapter would be an opportunity to contribute my time and energy into helping others meet workplace challenges, and improve the working conditions for WIU students, faculty, and staff. I appreciate the nomination to represent the WIU UPI Chapter as a member of the House of Delegates, and if elected, I will advocate strongly on behalf of our members.

Position: WIU House of Delegates

Candidate Name: Shawn Wochner

My name is Shawn Wochner and I serve as a Regional Admissions Counselor in the northwest suburbs of Chicago. I have worked for Admissions for 11 years and graduated from WIU in 2001. I have had the opportunity to help create various scholarship opportunities and visit programs for prospective students in the Chicagoland area. I also currently serve on the new Liftoff implementation team. I had the privilege to serve as a member of the Extended Caucus Team for the negotiations of the return-to-work MOU this past summer. This was an amazing opportunity, and if elected to the House of Delegates, I would look to continue to be a strong advocate for Unit B professionals, all UPI members while also keeping those faculty and staff who are contractually assigned to work off campus always in the conversation.