

## **Q&A for Strike Hardship Fund**

### **Q: What is a Strike Hardship Fund and why do we need one?**

**A:** A Strike Hardship Fund provides financial assistance for the cost of life necessities, to union members who are out on strike. Usually this is during long strikes, but a short, day-long strike can also cause financial hardships. Having a fund in place shows the administration that we are serious about striking if we need to and it prepares us to support our most vulnerable members and maintain unity. The establishment of a Strike Hardship Fund would be voted on by members in a referendum and a Strike Hardship Fund Committee would be set up to oversee the fund and disbursements.

### **Q: How will the Strike Hardship Committee be formed?**

**A:** If a majority of the membership votes "YES" to temporarily assess a dues increase, a Strike Hardship Fund Committee will be established to oversee the disbursement of monies collected based on need in the event of a strike. Committee members will be appointed by the Executive Board in consultation with the Steward Council. The Committee shall create guidelines and procedures to ensure our most vulnerable colleagues are protected.

The Strike Hardship Fund Committee will consist of 4 to 6 members and represent both colleges, FT and PT faculty, the Executive Board and Steward Council. In addition, the 4 to 6 members shall include members who are not elected to Executive Board or Steward Council. The Strike Hardship Fund Committee will set up guidelines for disbursing the funds. The committee's guiding principles will be (1) allocate fund based on financial need, (2) follow non-discriminatory practices, (3) maintain transparency with regard to paperwork, and (4) maintain privacy for applicants for the funds.

### **Q: How large of a temporary dues increase?**

**A:** The current monthly dues rate is 1.2%, and the increase will bring the dues rate to 1.25%. Therefore, this increase will be 0.05% of your paycheck.

This increase represents 50 cents for each \$1000 of your monthly paycheck. The increase would be in effect only for the duration of the contract campaign; once we settle a contract, the temporary 0.05% increase will be discontinued.

[NOTE: To compute the exact amount of your dues increase: divide your monthly paycheck by 2000. For example, if your gross pay is \$8,000 per month, you would contribute \$4.00 to the Strike Hardship Fund for that month.]

### **Q: Is 0.05% a large enough increase to make a difference?**

**A:** We know that faculty members are hurting right now after years of no raises and increases in health care premiums. We want to keep the amount as small as we can while still building a fund large enough to be effective. With all of our members contributing over a period of time, we believe that we will raise enough money to help our members who need the most financial support. In the event of a strike, we may also solicit funds from other union locals and supporters.

**Q: What happens to the money if we don't go on strike?**

**A:** The dues increase will begin immediately and will cease in the month following contract ratification. When the contract campaign is over, we will confer with the membership on what to do – ideas re-appropriate the fund for other purposes (charity, faculty celebration), save it in a *standing* Strike Hardship Fund for the next contract campaign.. The full contract is up for negotiations June 30, 2017 and the next round of negotiations will begin thereafter.