

September 7, 2020

Dear Student Workers of Kenyon College:

I understand that you and your colleagues at Kenyon College are organizing and seeking to join together as a union to collectively bargain for better working conditions and wages.

Your fight, like the fight of many before you, is to improve the conditions of your employment. Collective bargaining means you and your co-workers will have an opportunity, as equals to management, to negotiate a legally binding contract. This contract will cover all aspects of your wages, benefits, job stability and working conditions. Your voice at the table is important to ensuring respect and fairness in the workplace.

On average, union workers earn 23% more than non-union workers. Union workers also have significantly better benefits and working conditions. Having a union means management is no longer unilaterally making decisions. Instead, a union institutes a legal process wherein a negotiating committee elected by you and your co-workers negotiates with your employer regarding workforce issues. When you and your colleagues join together as a union, the administration will be required to bargain with you in good faith. Having a union is critical to obtaining job security, guaranteed minimum hours, wage equity and a safe working environment.

I have had the privilege to work with many unionized faculty and staff at colleges and universities, including the full-time and adjunct faculty at the University of Vermont and the Vermont State Colleges. The important work these individuals do every day only benefits from having a collective voice in the workplace to fight for their rights.

I respect the critical work you do and wish you the very best in your efforts to create a democratic workplace where your voice has a seat at the table.

Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator