

Do not disregard this letter from the union!

University's Strategic Priorities Task Force recommendations require employee's immediate response!

A letter from Local 209's Executive Board. September 29, 2010.

Earlier this year the university created and staffed a Strategic Priorities Task Force to prioritize and align Miami's goals. The task force appears to be another university top heavy committee of hand picked individuals that includes administrators. In August, the task force released reports with recommendations concerning the university's future. The task force's recommendation regarding the service and maintenance staff is that the university should consider outsourcing our jobs for a cost saving measure. As this letter is written the dining hall employees have been notified that Aramark Services will be on campus this fall to conduct a study of their operations to ascertain whether or not they can provide the same level of food service operations but at a reduced cost to the university. The residential hall employees have also been informed that Marriot will be on campus studying their operations to decide if they can maintain the resident halls at a cheaper cost. Apparently no job is exempt from outsourcing and it's a matter of time before other departments are scrutinized. The Strategic Priorities Task Force reports can be reviewed on the internet at <http://www.miami.muohio.edu/spc/index.html> (paper and e-mail copies available upon request). The union strongly recommends that all the service and maintenance staff read the reports especially the "*Administrative Support Services and Operation of Facilities Subcommittee*", ASSOF Final Report.

We, as union leaders, are appalled that the university would even consider outsourcing our jobs even if they don't follow through with contracting out. What's happened that MU can no longer afford our meager salaries and in some cases poverty wages! We've all heard the threats over the years about outsourcing but this time it appears to be closer to a reality. We believe this is our university too and the employees are more Miami than the administration. We, "the locals", have kept Miami operating for years and in some cases decades because our parents and grandparents worked here. On the other hand, we consider the administration (Trustees, President, V.P., Provost, etc.) as "out of towners" and "outsiders". They're not from this area and they apparently do not have any devotion and loyalty to the workers who've kept Miami operating for years. We feel that the administration has come into our house and is trying to kick all of us out to the curb. Those of you who are not union members, remember this, your decision of not joining the union may have very well come back to haunt you. Those who have disassociated themselves from the union may have finally disassociated themselves right out of a job and taken the rest of us with you! Non-members of the union may have disassociated themselves one contract too many. We thought something like this could be a possibility sometime in the future due to the economic down turn. So to position ourselves in the future the union proposed language during the negotiations this summer that layoffs would not occur as long as outside contractors are on campus. This same language is found in bargaining agreements for other unions. We could not secure the language due to the large percentage of employees who are not union members. Do you think the university will ever stop building, renovating, and upgrading with outside contractors long enough to layoff employees? No, because construction projects are perpetual at Miami University. We feel it is unethical for an employer to layoff employees when at the same time their engaged in construction projects! Those who didn't strike in 2003 this may be your reward from the employer you crossed the picket lines for and stood behind. This is the employer that 80% of you believe is your friend and they'll take care of you, so therefore, you don't need a union and won't support it with your membership. The union's leadership feels this all could've been avoided by a preventative maintenance type of approach with a strong union membership so we could have bargained better language concerning the possibilities of outsourcing and layoffs. OK, we've said our peace about union disassociation. Now it's time to put our differences aside, move ahead and work together as a unit, and literally fight for our future.

We're not willing to lay down and take it! Are you? The union and employees must respond to this threat by conducting labor actions. We are planning many actions in the coming months and employee participation will be crucial for their success. Our intentions are to conduct actions such as, petition(s), letter writing campaigns, demonstrations, informational pickets, rallies, protesting, etc. It is crucial that employees mobilize and work as a unit against these threats. Union membership will not be required to participate in the actions. The union can not stress enough that employee participation will be essential. This is every bodies chance to actively participate in shaping your future and hopefully securing it. As for the workers who do not participate we'll accept it as you feel your job and future isn't worth saving.

To kick off our labor actions we are implementing two ideas. Union task force(s) to find and report government waste and a petition against outsourcing university jobs. **Union task forces** need to be created to serve as a "watch dog" on management efficiencies. At this point, the PFD employees have been told to operate more efficiently and show the university that we are the best deal. Over the years we've heard stories in PFD regarding the inefficiencies of management. For example one recent story is, a job needed to be completed and it was priced out at \$15,000 using university employees but for some reason it was out sourced for \$25,000. That's a red flag and stories like this need to be investigated!! How do we know our uniforms are bought from the cheapest vendor? In fact, the dining hall uniforms are purchased from Cintas. Did you know or do you remember that Cintas is owned by Richard T. Farmer, the man who donated \$30 mill for the school of business and the school named after him? That's a cozy little arrangement, isn't it? How do we know the cleaning supplies, food, any material we use to perform our jobs are bought

from the cheapest vendor? The point is, if management's spending practices are inefficient then the front line employees may never win the battle to be the best deal because the management team constantly drops the ball for us. Another issue needed looked at is the "time and material" contracts for the trade shops in PFD that are utilized very frequently to perform bargaining unit employees work. In article 52 of the bargaining agreement the university is permitted to contract out (out source) work when it's uneconomical for university employees to perform said work. We don't understand how the university could get work performed cheaper by utilizing out side contractors than the university employees performing it. As for the "time" (labor cost) aspect we all know outside contractors pay their employees more than we earn for doing the same work and on the "material" side, MU should be capable of purchasing job materials with their buying power as cheap as outside contractors. Things aren't adding up. Grievances can be filed on this issue and they should be to run off the outside contractors. Construction projects need to be examined to see if they are a genuine need or just merely a want. Ideally, at the least, we would like to have the following task forces: PFD - one for trades/grounds and one for building and special services, HD&GS - one for dining operations, one for housing operations, and one for Shriver center, one for Rec. Sports/Goggin ice arena, one for Hamilton campus and one for the Middletown campus and a special task force to write letters and articles for the local news outlets to keep the issue in front of every body and raise awareness. Other task forces can be added when needed and they can be comprised of any number of people and they will be under the direction of a union Executive Board Officer. For the task forces to succeed they must be staffed by employees and if the workers don't step up for this initiative it probably won't happen because the union officers are far too busy with grievances and disciplinary hearings to take on this added work load. The **petition against out sourcing university jobs** is circulating as we speak. Other petitions have been tried in the past with little participation from employees and as a result they are weak statements. It seems many workers at the university live in fear and won't even sign a petition. Folks, you're going to have to get passed your fear(s) and start participating by at least signing a petition if you want to make change. Change is usually made from the bottom up. Disassociation and silence is acceptance!!

Other areas that need to addressed are, how does outsourcing affect OPERS, (Ohio Public Employees Retirement System) and the local communities? An OPERS union task force needs to be created to contact OPERS and ascertain whether or not they have any dogs in this outsourcing fight, if they do, we need to work with them. Any job the university outsources will not pay into the OPERS retirement system because it'll be a private contractor and they're under social security. When hundreds of OPERS contributing jobs are eliminated the revenue for OPERS declines which in turn may affect the benefit levels that OPERS offers retirees. Individuals who are retired under OPERS should also have an interest in this issue because their retirement benefits could change due to less revenue being paid into OPERS because of government jobs being outsourced. Therefore, we are willing to help form a task force of OPERS retired workers to work this outsourcing issue from their perspective. As for the local communities, any money taken out of a local community will have a negative economic impact on that area. If private contractors take over and bring their workers with them their employees will most likely spend their incomes in the areas they reside, not in Oxford and the surrounding areas. The private contractors may offer to hire some Miami employees but that's problematic. First you'll probably take a pay cut down to minimum wage and second you'll be out of the OPERS system. When you take a pay cut that's less money for you to live on but it's also less money being spent in the community which hurts the local businesses which in turn hurts their employees, and so on, and so on, until it becomes a vicious circle. When you leave the OPERS retirement system you automatically go back into the social security system which opens up other cans of worms. This being said, the union is interested in creating a community task force.

It's shaping up to be a long three years to work under this new contract because we really needed our proposed new language regarding layoffs for protection. In fact, some of us might not be working at the university three years from now because we couldn't make the university move on our proposed layoff language due to low union memberships. A strong union membership serves as a constant vigilance against employees being treated in this manner. A flyer is being distributed titled "Did you know, or, Do you remember? a decade (or so) in review" which informs that between the years of 1997-2007 the university's administration did what they could to bust the union and hold down employees wages. But at the same time the salaries for their positions grew as much as four times faster then ours. Now they're considering throwing us under the bus and contracting out our jobs. They act like the university money comes out of their pockets, but it don't. It's tax payers money and we are the tax payers and we should have a say in how it's spent. How much more are you going to take before saying enough is enough! We expect the university/management to sweet talk all of us right up to the point they hand you your layoff notice because if they decide to out source our jobs they don't want in house employees to lay down on them before the out side contractors come in. Don't believe their sweet talk, we must react decisively! If you can't see what's going on before your eyes and if you feel you don't need a union at MU then you can't be helped. But for the rest of us it's time to get off our complacent duffs and mobilize our selves into action. Don't wait till it's too late, because at that point, it's too late! This issue requires a preventative maintenance type of approach to stop it before it starts. To volunteer for a task force and sign the petition against out sourcing our jobs contact one of the union officers below or drop a note in the mail slot on the entrance doors of the union office, ASAP.

Pres. Mattie Gray - (513)255-4240

VP. Mark Sawyer - (513)255-5306

Sec. Amber VanWinkle

Treas. Shirley Young - (513)255-4221

E-Board officers

Greg Clemen

Wendell Davis

Tiki Digby

Stanley Gregg

Dustin Jones - (513)255-7106

In solidarity,
Local 209's Executive Board