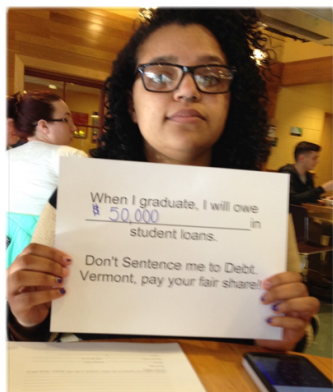




Special Edition: Reclaiming the Promise, Part-Time Bargaining, and Solidarity with CCV Faculty

by Morna Flaum, Newsletter Editor, VSCFF Vice-President, Part-Time Faculty Member, JSC



I see very clearly the essential function of unions in our work space and political space. People need unions to interact as entities within institutional spaces to create equity and voice for individuals. As teachers we owe it to our students to strengthen our workplaces so that we can give them the supportive education they deserve.

Students such as Castleton Sophomore Audrey Phillip (left) benefit when faculty are organized. Audrey testified alongside VSCFF members at

the Appropriations hearing in Rutland for increased VSC funding.

Our teaching conditions are the learning conditions of students. We owe it to our children, our students, and ourselves to fight for respect in our workplace and in every workplace. Our nation is stronger when there is respect and support for education, for workers, and for working families. Educated people realize that words are powerful. Here are some wonderful words: Solidarity, We the People, Brothers and Sisters, We Shall Overcome, I Have A Dream.

New Faculty Lecture Series At JSC and Castleton



Part-Time Unit Goes to the Table

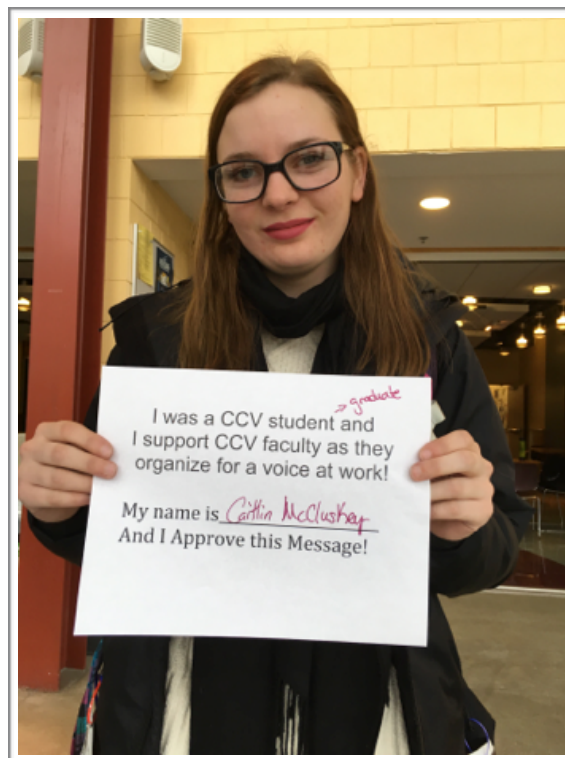


CCV Faculty are Organizing!

As a part-time faculty member of the VSC, I understand that having a contract benefits my students. The connection, respect, and support that our union provides allows us to give more time and energy to our students. Our tiered pay grades, access to professional development, and our other benefits reward our years of teaching experience and encourage us to remain in the profession. We have input into curriculum development and engage with our full time peers to enhance our students' learning. We have dedicated office space.

Because of our connections with our colleagues and our academic departments we can give our students advice and long term guidance that they would not otherwise have.

The VSC and CCV faculty teach the same students – we mostly teach local Vermonters, young and old. We all benefit when we can work together to support our students. Right now our VSC faculty union is a vital and alive entity that can engage with the college administration to assure the parameters of our security. We support CCV faculty by inviting them to join our faculty union; your 550 voices will be a welcome addition! If you'd like to help with the CCV organizing effort, please let me know.



We care deeply about our students. Educators everywhere understand that students represent the future of our world. **As VSC educators we have been working hard to Reclaim the Promise that the Vermont legislators made to fund the system in whole in substantial part when they founded the Vermont State College system in the sixties.** As educators we are deeply distressed by the fact that our students are paying 84% of the costs of keeping the lights on, maintaining the buildings and grounds, maintaining the technologies, the libraries, the staff and the faculty of our colleges. We see our students overburdened, holding down multiple jobs while trying to succeed in class, and sadly overwhelmed to the point where student retention is a serious problem. At the same time, faculty at CCV receive no benefits, have no job security, and receive no step increases. Our education system should not rest on the shoulders of students and adjuncts. That is why we are partnering with the VSC, students and faculty at CCV, JSC, LSC, VTC, and Castleton University in our campaign to Reclaim the Promise.

Please send us your news, opinions and ideas for our next issue! Our goal is to create awareness of the many ways our union and our members work together to help students, to thrive, and to envision positive change.

Reclaiming the **P****romise**

Please call or text Morna Flaum at 802-730-2142 or email morna.writer@gmail.com

Reclaiming the Promise

-Linda Olson (AFT VT VP for Higher Ed)

The Reclaim the Promise campaign was launched by the VSC Faculty Federation and AFT VT way back in November of 2012. Over the past 5 years I have seen a significant change in the responses of legislators in terms of their rhetoric about public higher education. When we started this campaign, legislators told us that they supported public higher education in theory, but could not see a way to give us more funding. After 5 years of showing up to the Statehouse, calling our legislators, working with key legislators, creating a legislative study group, and writing letters to the editors we have convinced legislators that an investment in the VSC is an investment in Vermont. For example, **26 legislators cosponsored Representative Matt Hill's bill H122 to increase VSC funding due to our phone calls.**



I am particularly proud of the work we have done this year. We have created an infrastructure so that we have people ready to contribute to the cause with very little notice. This is certainly due to the ongoing hard work of the Faculty Federation members, but it also would not have been possible without the tireless work of CCV faculty.

Our colleagues at CCV have been an integral part of the Reclaim the Promise campaign and I would like to thank them in particular for their invaluable help and support. I look forward to welcoming the CCV faculty into the Faculty Federation, because they have shown me how much we can accomplish for the betterment of our students, institutions and state when we work together.

Please watch out for email in the near future. The legislative session is only half over and we will need your help again.



Interview with CCV Organizing Committee Member Jericho Parmes

What do you love about your work and what inspired you to organize a union at CCV?

I teach English Composition, Dimensions, and occasional creative writing courses. I have been teaching at CCV for the past four years and during that time, I've been continually impressed by the level of commitment and enthusiasm the students at CCV each bring to class. There is nothing I love more than those moments when I see my students let all of the distractions of life drift away, and give themselves over to their own curiosity and questions.

I've been most inspired by my faculty colleagues at CCV who have shared their stories both of their love and commitment to teaching as well as the concerns many of us share about how unsustainable teaching positions at CCV really are, particularly for those who may rely on the income from their course assignments.

What are the key issues facing you and your colleagues? How will a union help?

It has become increasingly clear to me that we need to work together on behalf of more clearly defined policies that support greater organizational structure, communication, job security, and opportunities for advancement. I believe a union can help in this regard. I imagine a union for CCV faculty that supports pay scales based on credits taught, clearly defined hiring criteria and grievance procedures. I imagine a union that allows for faculty governance and a significant seat at the table when it comes to academic planning.

How do you think forming a union will help students?

Most importantly, I imagine a union that understands that a strong, well-supported faculty is key to student success. I see my support for a union as inherently linked to my commitment to student success. I want to work at an institution where, instead of worrying about next semester hiring or whether I'll be able to maintain income six months down the line, I can keep my energy and attention focused on what truly matters; teaching!

You and your colleagues have joined Faculty Federation leaders in meetings with political and educational leaders recently. How has it felt to have a seat at the table?

I tell my students to speak their minds. I tell them that there is strength in discovering conviction, in effectively justifying their arguments, in finding their voice. Working collaboratively with our colleagues in the Faculty Federation has been a welcomed opportunity to exercise our own voices as faculty. Having a seat at the table has certainly been rewarding, but it's not something I take lightly. It is a privilege to be able to speak on behalf of the challenges affecting higher education, and the solutions that will benefit the students we serve. And yet, while it's inspiring to step out into the community and engage with local political leaders on issues relevant to Vermont State Colleges, it has also underscored the need for us to keep at it.

Together, I believe we can maintain a consistent and unified presence within, across, and beyond our institutions. I'm looking forward to what the next steps of this campaign will bring!

Jericho Parms is the author of *Lost Wax* (University of Georgia Press). Her essays have appeared in *Fourth Genre*, *The Normal School*, *Hotel Amerika*, *Brevity* and elsewhere. In addition to teaching at CCV, she is the Associate Director of the MFA in Writing program at Vermont College of Fine Arts and teaches in the Professional Writing Program at Champlain College.

Over the next few weeks, you'll see organizing committee members and organizers on campus and in our communities. We are looking to have a conversation with each of our colleagues about how to best build our union and strengthen our school.

Join us in this important, historic campaign.



Visit our Facebook page to join the discussion with your colleagues statewide. <https://www.facebook.com/CCVUnitedFaculty/>

You can also e-mail us at:
ccvadjunctsoc@gmail.com.

If you'd prefer to talk on the phone, give us a call at (802) 540-8326.

Rising Above the Rancor and Finding Hope

In January, unity gatherings were held at Castleton and JSC as part of a national week of actions on campuses across the country!

"We are facing unprecedented division in this nation right now and the intent of this rally is to say not on our campus. We will not be divided by the rhetoric of hate. The purpose of this event is to create an environment where community members are able to take academic risks and where students, faculty and staff feel supported, encouraged and safe. We are here to rise above the rancor and make a commitment to look out for one another. Your presence here indicates that you are committed to these goals as well." -First Year Castleton Student, Sarah Robbins at January Unity Rally.



A Fossil Free VSC! by Brendan Lalor

If you think the VSC should take a stand for environmental and racial justice, then please join the Facebook group *and* spread the word! Here is a statement of the VSC Fossil Free platform:



Fossil-Free VSC calls upon the Vermont State Colleges System to take concrete steps to align its banking with two of the most compelling moral imperatives of our time - environmental and racial justice:

(1) Planet-friendly Banking: No banking with institutions that profit from climate and habitat destruction - as the VSC's present bank, TD Bank, does (given its investments in pipelines that carry dirty tar sands oil and threaten to poison waterways).

(2) People-friendly Banking: No banking with institutions that benefit from violations of the rights and interests of peoples - as the VSC's present bank, TD Bank, does (given its investment in the Dakota Access Pipeline, which violates rights of the Standing Rock Sioux under a treaty with the United States government).

This is the time to act: The wheels of financial change are turning at the System level, as the Board is currently considering proposals for debt restructuring.

Will you join us in urging the VSC's Chancellor Spaulding and the Board of Trustees to take the lead in making a historic difference for environmental and racial justice? And let me know if you are willing to be a point-person on your campus (so far, we have structure at Castleton and Johnson, plus CCV members). May we, collectively, become all we can be as the VSC!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FossilFreeVSC>



Congratulations Dr. Bacchus!

Johnson State College Professor of Environmental Science and VSCFF member Tania Bacchus is celebrating her first week as a US citizen, after 30 years of living in the United States. The following is a transcript of a conversation with Dr. Bacchus, reminding us all that we are a nation of diverse cultures and together we can weather any storm.

Life often happens in ways that we do not always predict. I came to the US in 1987, from southern England to attend graduate school and found such a welcoming place that I basically decided to make this country my home.

I completed my masters degree in geological oceanography at the Florida Institute of Technology. After that, I did my doctoral work at the University of Maine in Orono where I was involved in a government funded research program looking at how the ocean contributed to the demise of the large ice sheet that covered North America during the last ice age. In addition to teaching, I now do research work analyzing the microclimate data of northern Vermont and that also involves both VSC and non-VSC students as part of the VT EPSCoR project. By training and degrees, I am a marine and atmospheric scientist that became a citizen a week ago!

The primary reason that I became a citizen is that I do not think that I will ever live in the UK again. The second reason is that I have now lived in the US longer than I have ever lived anywhere else and my experiences here have made me a different person from the British girl that arrived in this country 30 years ago. I once jokingly told a colleague recently that I knew that I had become Americanized when I got my second tv!

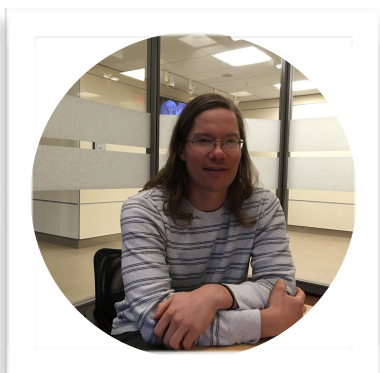
I originally came to this country seeking greater opportunities. My father was from Guyana, South America, but he was a British citizen (the product of colonialism). My mother was British. Growing up in southern England, and being a child of mixed parentage came with some unique challenges. Because of my background and experiences, I wanted to end up in a place where diverse cultures were welcomed and celebrated. I found that when I moved to the United States in the late 1980's.

Once I got here a world of opportunities opened up for me both personally and professionally. For example, after I graduated and was working at JSC, I had the opportunity to go to the bottom of the ocean in research submersibles at depths below 1500-2000 feet, well below the standard depth for free diving. This gave me a unique "window" into the world of marine life rarely seen by humans! In addition, while I have been in this country I have also met some of the best people on the planet.

For many years it did not matter that I was not a US citizen - being a "Brit" in the US is not difficult. Becoming a citizen is quite a lengthy and complicated process that can often get shelved during a busy and hectic schedule. It is also a "big deal" to become a citizen of a country other than the one that you were born into. But this election campaign inspired me to make that change as I wanted to be part of the decision making process and not just have my participation be yelling at the tv when I heard something that I did not like.

Lyndon State College and Johnson State Unification Provost Search

Dr. Gregory Petric, JSC Math Faculty, JSC FF Chapter Secretary is the Co-chair of the Search Committee for the Northern Vermont University Provost.




There are four candidates participating in the interview process that will take place throughout the month of March.

Says Dr. Petric, “The Search Committee consists of faculty, staff, and students who are all in agreement about our priorities. We want to make sure that the provost we hire understands the dynamic programming taking place on both campuses, the talents and skills of our faculty and staff, and works with us to create an environment that allows us to expand our offerings to students.”

57% of VSC students are the first generation of their families to attend college. Many of our colleagues are first generation as well! This year, first generation faculty on campuses throughout the VSC system put posters on our doors to show unity and support. As part of a grant from the VSC, the FF will be holding workshops this summer for faculty who are interested in supporting FGWC students. Please contact Linda Olson at Linda.Olson@castleton.edu for more details!

FGWC
initiative
Sponsored by:
Castleton President's Office
A Union of Professionals


TRIO



**FIRST GENERATION
WORKING-CLASS**

DID YOU KNOW:
50% of Castleton students are first generation college students?
43% of full-time Castleton faculty were also first generation college students?
90% of Castleton part-time faculty were first generation college students?

PANEL DISCUSSION:
October 20
Jeffords Auditorium
4 p.m.


Castleton
UNIVERSITY

High Energy VSCFF PT Negotiating Team Needs Your Input!

A strong team of negotiators is getting ready to bargain for our VSCFF part-time faculty contract. Our current contract expires August 2017. **Please contact a negotiating team member below for a link to our contract survey.** If you are an agency fee payer who would like to join, please contact your bargaining rep, as well. We are incredibly fortunate to have this team bargaining for us:

John Hoagland

(john.hoagland@castleton.edu) (CU) negotiated for us before, and he wants to remind us that negotiating takes a lot of time and effort: "The team does not get paid for all the months of work that they do. People need to communicate their contract issues to the team as soon as possible. You can't complain after the fact if you did not voice your concerns prior to negotiations."



Everyone has a voice and most have an opinion. Join the union, and let your voice be heard!"



Jonathan Kaplan

(jdk02220@lsc.vsc.edu) (LSC) emphasizes the importance of finding common ground and listening well. This is his second time on the bargaining team, because he likes resolutions that benefit

all parties and strengthen our institutions. Also, the way he sees it, "negotiation is a form a problem solving and I like to solve problems."

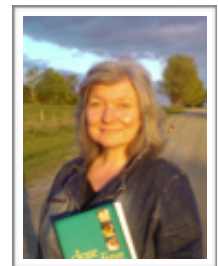
Jonathan's inspirational words are "Be civil, be strong, and be united towards a common cause and the good of all."

Timothy Egan (timothytegan@gmail.com). Tim brings his lifetime of working in the media and business world to his JSC and LSC students, and now to our part time negotiating team. "I see the time demands on part time educators. My business management skills help me understand the value of our work and I will make sure that value is respected in contract negotiations."

Kelly Colby (kellyccolby@gmail.com) says, "I've been working as an adjunct for LSC for about 8 years. It's very easy as a part-timer to simply ignore what goes on outside of our regular duties. Doing so, though, may be a problem. Our union can't represent us if we aren't involved enough for them to know our concerns. Getting even nominally involved is a benefit to everyone."

Morna Flaum, JSC morna.writer@gmail.com

I've been on the DA of the VSCFF for about 4 years, Vice President of the VSCFF for the past two years. I write the newsletter, serve on the Part Time Negotiations committee for the next contract. I've also helped out quite a bit with outreach and support of our brothers and sisters at CCV who are trying to organize a union as well.



Michael Austin (is on CU campus, his office phone is [802 468 1338](tel:8024681338)). Michael hopes a stronger contract will enhance our role and encourage greater participation of part time faculty.

Faculty Lecture Series at JSC And Castleton University Launched by AFT Vermont!

Castleton University Faculty Member and AFT Vermont VP Linda Olson (below) and JSC Faculty Member Amy Welch (right) have launched lecture series on both campuses to celebrate faculty scholarship!



Says Amy Welch, “The Johnson State College Faculty Lecture Series, which is also supported by the administration, is off to a great start, with support and enthusiasm from administration, staff, students and fellow faculty. Several people have expressed their appreciation for having a mechanism by which everyone on campus can learn more about the incredible research and creative work our faculty are engaged in. It also seems to be fostering a greater sense of collegiality and culture of scholarship among the faculty. We are excited to embark on the second year of this lecture series in the fall.

We have had three presentations so far and there's one left this semester. The details can be found here: <http://www.jsc.edu/news-events/events/faculty-lecture-series>.

Last week, I sent out the call for proposals for next year (fall and spring) and I have already received three! We are still receiving proposals and the deadline is April 10th. We are hoping to have the schedule set before the spring semester ends so that people can put the dates in their calendars and try to avoid potential committee scheduling conflicts. I think our goal going forward will be to have two or three presentations per semester.”



Michael Zebrowski began the JSC lecture series with his presentation called “Watershed: A Watershed Moment,”

The Castleton Faculty Lecture Series



“The idea of the lectures series emerged from a sense that faculty scholarship should be celebrated. Why shouldn’t it be hosted by our professional organization, our union? The participants and audience have said that they really appreciate this space that celebrates the work faculty often do in isolation. We just had one last week, and it was awesome!” said Linda Olson who launched the Castleton Lecture Series last semester. Please contact Linda if you are interested in submitting a proposal for the fall lecture series.

You still have an opportunity to catch lectures at Castleton in the Jeffords Auditorium. Refreshments will be served. Please see schedule below.

Chris Boettcher:

The Idea of a University

Wednesday March 29th at 5 pm

Sanjukta Ghosh

Harlots, Hellraisers and
Heroines:

Feminism in the New
Millennium Bollywood Style

Wednesday April 19th at 5 pm

Nice Shout Out From Bernie!

“I have had the opportunity of working with thousands of workers who are members of unions-including many who work in the field of education. These include the full-time and adjunct faculty at the University of Vermont, and the Vermont State Colleges... These workers formed their unions to improve the conditions of their employment. What forming a union means is that you and your co-workers will have the opportunity to sit down as legal equals with management to negotiate a legally binding contract covering all aspects of your wages, benefits, and working conditions.”

-Bernie Sanders (Excerpt from February letter to grad students in NC)

