



**Associated Students of Western Washington University  
Board of Directors  
Resolution Regarding Students' Purchasing Power, Job  
Opportunities, and Food Supply  
May 2012**

**Whereas**, the unionization of non-student food service employees on campus will increase the labor costs of providing food, Aramark will not suffer alone but instead pass increased costs onto students through higher food prices. This will lower our purchasing power at a time when college is already becoming less affordable,

**Whereas**, a union contract will prevent Aramark from replacing non-student employees with lower-wage students, unionization will take away job opportunities that some of us students depend on to get through college,

**Whereas**, a union strike would cut off our campus's food supply, thousands would go hungry, campus activities would be disrupted, and the missions of the AS and University would be compromised,

Whereas, every employee has the right to be treated in a fair and ethical manner,

**Be it resolved** that the ASWWU, the University, and Aramark have mutual interest in food service employees on campus not forming a union.

**Be it resolved** that the ASWWU urges the University and its contractors to preserve students' purchasing power, job opportunities, and food supply by ~~preventing~~discouraging the unionization of non-student employees on campus.

Be it resolved that the ASWWU, while recognizing that workers have a federal right to unionize, encourages Aramark, its employees, and the University to explore all options and find an alternative solution(s) to address the fair and ethical treatment of University Dining Services employees.

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President  
Anna Ellermeir

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Vice President for Business &  
Operations  
Travis Peters

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Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Fabiola Arvizu

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Vice President for Activities  
Mario Orallo-Molinario

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Vice President for Diversity  
Deng Duot

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Vice President for Governmental Affairs  
Iris Maute-Gibson

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Vice President for Student Life  
Sara Richards

## Costs of Unionization

# SEIU<sup>®</sup>.ORG

SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION,<sup>®</sup> CTW, CLC

**\$917** = Median weekly earnings in 2010 of union members.

**\$717** = Median weekly earnings in 2010 of non-union workers.

That's a yearly difference in salary of **\$10,400** for union members vs. non-union members.

Union members earn an average of \$4.95 more per hour - which equates to a yearly difference of \$10,300.

<http://www.seiu.org/a/ourunion/research/union-advantage-facts-and-figures.php>

According to the union trying to unionize our campus, for 100 non-student food service employees, **this could add up to \$1,040,000 per year in additional costs to Western Washington University dining services** (excluding mandatory union dues). These extra costs bring students zero tangible benefits and the prices of university catering, dining hall meals, and a la carte purchases will increase as a result. The accompanying detriments will include the potential for strikes and a loss of student jobs.

For \$1,040,000 in additional costs, how many faculty members or full-ride scholarships could we pay for? How many meals or textbooks could students afford? Can all students in dorms, who are required to buy meal plans, actually afford to share this million dollar expense? That's \$4,160,000 over a four-year college career, so will each student's shared burden mean some of them will not come to college because they cannot afford it?

Below is a similar SEIU contract from Kankakee, IL that includes the costs of unionization:

AGREEMENT		EXHIBIT A	
between		FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEES WAGE SCALE	
KANKAKEE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 111		JULY 1, 2011 TO JUNE 30, 2013	
and		2011-2012	2012-13
SEIU LOCAL 73	Head Cook 1 (KHS, KJHS, Kennedy, King, LCC)	\$16.41	\$16.78
FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEES	Head Cook 2 (Aroma Park, Edison, Lafayette, Steuben, Mark Twain, Taft, Proegler, IMPACT)	\$14.98	\$15.32
	Cook	\$14.16	\$14.48
2011-14	Cashier and	\$13.24	\$13.54
	Food Service Driver		
	Cafeteria Helper	\$12.58	\$12.86

Average wage = \$14.60

[http://www.k111.k12.il.us/assets/1/documents/Food\\_Service\\_Agreement02-29-12.pdf](http://www.k111.k12.il.us/assets/1/documents/Food_Service_Agreement02-29-12.pdf)

## U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Wages in Bellingham, WA

Major Occupational Group	Average hourly wage	
	United States	Bellingham
Food Preparation and serving related	10.21	11.18

<http://www.bls.gov/ro9/oesbell.pdf>

SEIU unions' \$14.60 wage makes 31% more than Bellingham food service employees' fair \$11.18 wage, so on-campus food service would be paid more than what is fair. Additionally, a union, by nature, restricts membership, so Bellingham community members will not be able to join it and that is unfair to them.



### Healthcare

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) will take full effect. Universal healthcare will give health insurance to every American not covered by their employer.

However, if Western is forced to pay for expensive healthcare (when the rest of Bellingham's food service does not get this), the federal government will not cover it.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patient\\_Protection\\_and\\_Affordable\\_Care\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patient_Protection_and_Affordable_Care_Act)

Employees will be given healthcare no matter what, but Western should not have to pay for it indefinitely. Saving Western 100 years of healthcare costs is a good reason to vote for this resolution.

While Obamacare is being challenged at the Supreme Court, 85% of legal experts expect it to survive.



#### NEWS FLASH

#### AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION POLL SHOWS LEGAL EXPERTS OVERWHELMINGLY BELIEVE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT WITH SURVIVE SCOTUS | The American Bar

Association polled "a select group of academics, journalists and lawyers who regularly follow and/or comment on the Supreme Court" for their predictions on how the Supreme Court will decide the Affordable Care Act lawsuit. A massive 85 percent said that the Court would uphold the law on the merits, and another 9 percent said that they believe the Court will hold that it does not have jurisdiction to hear the case — meaning that only a tiny fraction of legal experts believe that the Court will accept the utterly meritless case against the ACA.

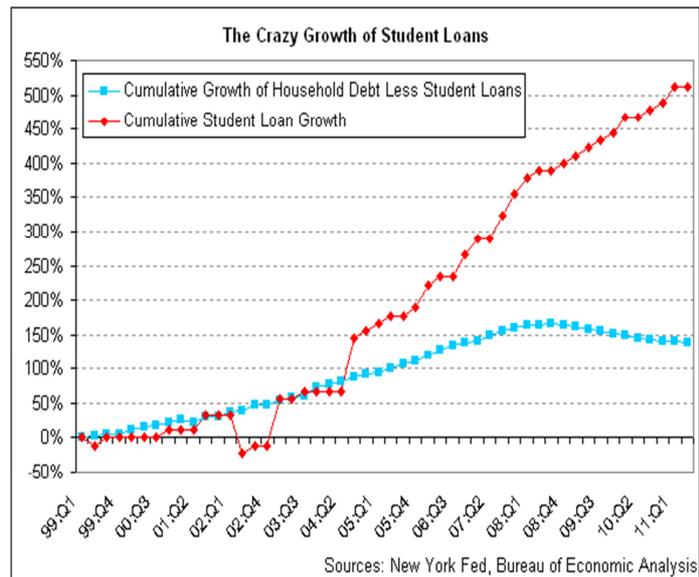
Tags: [Obamacare](#) [Supreme Court](#)

<http://thinkprogress.org/justice/2012/03/16/445899/american-bar-association-poll-shows-legal-experts-overwhelmingly-believe-affordable-care-act-with-survive-scotus/>

## On Student Jobs

College debt now exceeds credit card debt and tuition keeps skyrocketing. Now if a union forms, food prices will increase and make college even less affordable. Students will need jobs more than ever, but by the union contract guaranteeing jobs for non-students, Aramark will cut student hours and whole student jobs.

How many students will have to incur more student debt? How many students will live poorer while at college? Or worse, how many students will just not come to or drop out of college because they cannot afford it... because they do not have enough hours or a job at all?



## On non-student strikes

As unions age, strike funds accumulate, so workers can get paid to not work. Aramark employees have gone on strike at college campuses before, so it is a possibility here at Western. As food production on campus would cease, this would cause serious health issues for people with diet-related conditions like diabetes, cause hunger and its associated cognitive shortcomings that are detrimental to academics, and cause students to spend more time off-campus. Students would ultimately do worse at school as they would spend more time commuting for food and less time studying.

## **Letter to the Editor: Says not all Aramark employees want union**

### **Written by Aramark employees in the Western Front**

Tuesday, 24 April 2012 05:26

The recent discussion of bringing a union to Western's food service has created a stir on campus. We would like to state first and foremost that the groups of employees petitioning for the union are not representative of all Aramark employees. There is a large number of us who have been misrepresented by these pro-union workers and we feel it is important that all voices in this matter are heard. It would be incorrect to claim that we are anti-union; however, we do not feel that in our case a union is necessary.

The union enthusiasts have brought forth many arguments over the past few weeks, some of which we would like to address in this letter.

An article was published in the Western Front on April 10 that claimed employees were seeking protection from the union over write-ups for taking lunches that were shorter than 30 minutes or clocking in incorrectly. A union is not the answer to this issue, as Aramark is simply enforcing Washington state law with their rules. The law of the state is the law; employees will avoid issues if they adhere to these policies, with or without a union.

When a group of employees is represented by a union, they are not necessarily the only group represented. The union that would be coming in to represent food service workers is the same group that currently represents other groups on Western's campus. When the union comes together to bargain for the workers, the interest of all workers is taken into account, not just that of the small group that we would be in. What is in the best interest of us, as Aramark employees, may not be in the best interest of the rest of the workers the union represents. Therefore we may not be represented as we might wish. Representation means just that – someone else is selected to speak for a group. When this occurs, the individual voices within the group are lost and we will fight to prevent this.

When working on a college campus, it is common that many people are employed September through June and very few are employed during the summer. This is not a new development with Aramark, this is how working on Western's campus has been in the past as well.

Claims have been made that the letter sent to full-time employees by Aramark upper management had a "threatening tone." This is not the way that many employees interpreted the letter and we would like to make it clear that the few who spoke out and made these claims are not representative of the group of Aramark full-time employees.

It is important to us that all sides of the issue be represented. We feel it is very important that any employee who makes a decision whether or not they want a union to be well educated. It is our belief that a union is not needed for Aramark employees and we believe that is made clear within our counter argument.

**Letter submitted by: Vicky Visser, Lisa Henley, Blake Engram, Brandon Artino, Coty Sandberg, Tracy Lambert, Vicky Alvarado, Danielle Schmidt, Susie Molendyk**

E-mail letter sent from Benjamin Brockman to each member of the AS Board of Directors.

## Non-student unionization

From: Benjamin Brockman  
To: AS Board Members  
Thursday, May 03, 2012 9:55 PM

The AS Senate is attempting to bring a resolution before the AS Board urging Aramark to remain neutral on the potential unionization of its non-student employees. I ask that you not assess the characteristics of unions in general, just the effect an on-campus food services union could have on students at WWU:

- 1. Rising Food Prices** – Labor is expensive and unionization will certainly increase the costs of providing food. Aramark will not suffer all of this – increased costs will be passed on to students in the form of higher food prices. Some students will afford fewer things, eat less food, and/or eat more cheap food like top raman. College is already becoming less affordable – this makes it worse.
- 2. Less Student Jobs** – The WF mentioned that current non-student “employees sense their hours are being given to minimum-wage workers to cut costs.” These are students that Aramark wants to hire. Union contracts, including already existing ones at Western, state that once a union member has a job, that the job can *never* become a student job (and we pay higher prices, see #1). Students can do these jobs too and some of us need them.
- 3. Food Supply Stoppage** – A potential union strike, while less likely than #1 and #2, would close every kitchen on campus that thousands of us depend on. This would disrupt classes, work, and the missions of both the AS and University.

Non-student food service employees unionizing is a real issue happening on campus right now. Unless the AS Senate can show that students’ benefits from non-student unionization outweighs the harms listed above, I ask that you oppose the resolution brought before you. If we can get the Board to take a stance against this, the opposites of the effects listed above could occur instead.

I ask that as my elected representative – to the benefit of food-eating and job-seeking students on campus – you help me draft a resolution against the unionization of non-student workers on campus. Can we schedule a time work on this together?

Regards,

**Benjamin Brockman**  
MBA Candidate ‘12  
B.A. Financial Economics ‘11