



# 2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

## United Campus Workers of Arizona, CWA Local 7065

Below are the UCWAZ Executive Committee candidates' names and statements for our upcoming election. Each candidate is listed underneath the position they are running for.

### GENERAL POSITIONS

#### **PRESIDENT**

- Michael Kintscher
- Dave Wells

#### **VICE PRESIDENT**

- Marcos Esparza

#### **TREASURER**

- Miranda Lopez

#### **SECRETARY**

- Justine Hecht

### CHAPTER POSITIONS

#### **ASU CHAIR**

- K'Ehleyr McNulty

#### **ASU VICE CHAIR**

- Ian Sherwood

#### **ASU SECRETARY**

- Hilary Harp

#### **NAU CHAIR**

- Gregory Lella

#### **NAU VICE CHAIR**

- Wes Sleet

#### **NAU SECRETARY**

- No candidate

#### **UA CHAIR**

- No candidate

#### **UA VICE CHAIR**

- No candidate

#### **UA SECRETARY**

- Nieves Vásquez

# PRESIDENT



## Michael Kintscher

Michael Kintscher is a PhD student at Arizona State University studying collaboration. Michael began organizing as a queer person serving as a National Officer in the Boy Scouts of America, where they organized internal resistance to a ban on queer members. Michael is entering their 10th year at ASU. Through their time on the Rainbow Coalition Executive board, and as a student organization adviser, Michael partnered with faculty and staff to plan events and campaigns outreaching to marginalized communities. Michael spent the past three years serving in Graduate Student Government as a key leader internally organizing to push for shared governance. Michael also spent the past two years serving on the UCWAZ Finance, Legal Support, and Bylaws Committees, and is currently serving as Local President. Michael worked for seven years in the public sector and strongly advocates for higher education. Michael's policy work and persuasive writing caught the attention of the CWA National Vice President of Public Healthcare and Education Workers and served as the basis for the national CWA conversation connecting protest crackdowns to the labor movement following the mass arrests and gross violation of civil rights in the university responses to pro-Palestine encampments earlier this year. In a second term as Local President, Michael would further strengthen the committee structures to better engage members, and work with the Executive and Steering Committees to develop a proactive action plan to secure a permanent seat at the decision-making table for the workers that make higher education run.

# PRESIDENT



## Dave Wells

UCWAZ needs structural changes at universities and ABOR to enhance worker power. Dave retired in December 2023 after 25 years of service as a teaching professor at Arizona State University, 10 years serving actively in the university senate, and three times as president of the college assembly for the College of Integrative Sciences and Arts, including in his last semester shepherding an inclusive process in a divisive environment to pass new bylaws. Dave joined the union in June 2022 after, with no warning, five colleagues' contracts were not renewed. He helped lead a college union working group to resist an increasingly toxic environment that created a survey that identified widespread dissatisfaction. The Provost dismissed the findings, and the situation continues to deteriorate. Dave plans to build a more active union both internally and externally that backs students, staff and faculty and expands our rights. He has a track record with his current work, research director for the Grand Canyon Institute. He facilitated a media campaign in 2018 for charter school accountability that led to results and became a key point in the legislative and governor races for both parties. During COVID, he organized a coalition that successfully increased state unemployment insurance benefits for the first time in 17 years. He's also been cited repeatedly as a critic of UAGC since its inception. Through interactions with governance units, publicizing research, pressure campaigns, media outreach and personal outreach to every member, Dave seeks to guide the union to a more influential position.

# VICE PRESIDENT



## **Marcos Esparza**

Marcos Esparza is a PhD student in Optical Sciences and Engineering at the University of Arizona. Within our union, he is currently active in the organizing and student committees. With the organizing committee, he has helped with recruiting efforts by making welcome calls to new members and participating in building walkthroughs/canvassing. With the student committee, he has helped with various campaigns and has worked with other students to organize events such as this year's U of A DisOrientation and a Chop From the Top teach-in. He has attended multiple ABOR meetings (at the U of A and NAU), participating in the public comment portion where he has spoken in support of union issues such as bundling graduate student fees into tuition and the Chop From the Top Campaign. Within U of A shared governance, he is an at-large representative for the Graduate and Professional Student Council where he serves on the research policy committee. As vice president of our local, he plans on working with our union members and staff to focus on our recruitment efforts to increase our union power and sustain our current and future campaigns with the goal of achieving a collective bargaining agreement. Thank you for considering his candidacy for Vice President of UCWA (CWA Local 7065).

# TREASURER



## Miranda Lopez

After graduating in 2018 from the University of Arizona, Miranda worked for the statewide Democratic Coordinated Campaign for two consecutive cycles, first as a Field Organizer and later as a Regional Organizing Director. She then worked for the Pima County Democratic Party (PCDP) in 2021 as their Executive Director. During her time as ED, she gained hands-on experience with submitting campaign finance reports, and created a new system to track the county's spending and fundraising goals. In the spring of 2023, she started working for the Arizona Students' Association (ASA) as their Southern Regional Organizing Director; ASA works to advocate for students in the AZ state legislature, to develop student leaders on college campuses, and to mobilize these students to take action against harmful legislation. This fall semester, Miranda and her students registered almost 600 students to vote in this year's general election. She is also a full-time student now pursuing her Masters in Public Administration. As an active member of UCW's organizing committee, student caucus, and new UA caucus, Miranda has helped UCW organize rallies and speakers at ABOR events on the UA campus. She wants to bring her skills and experiences to the position of UCW Treasurer by ensuring that all accounting and financial reports are kept up to date and made transparent to the general membership. Additionally, she believes her leadership on the Executive and Steering Committees will provide an essential perspective from someone who is both a UA graduate student and deeply connected to the organizing community in Southern Arizona.

# SECRETARY



## Justine Hecht

Justine is a PhD student in Justice Studies at ASU, a former adjunct professor, a current tenure-track faculty member in Sociology at Maricopa Community College, and a co-founding member of United Campus Workers of Arizona. Presently, she serves as one of our union delegates to Higher Education Labor United, where she also acts as informal co-chair for its Contingency Task Force. Here they take meticulous meeting minutes, schedule regular meetings, and manage numerous internal documents, preparing them well for the role of UCW Secretary. As Secretary, she will ensure timely communication of Executive committee and related meetings with all our members. Their experience across labor categories and institutions has taught them that cross-job solidarity is essential to our victory, yet also full of challenges. Labor contingency in higher education systematically undermines worker power, by design: creating instability, inequality, and hyper-competition. But it also creates space for solidarity across job categories, as we learn that precarity for any of us impacts all our working conditions. The UCW secretary role offers a unique position to record and reflect on the diversity of views and conditions that our wall-to-wall organizing must face. Listening to each other is key! We need one another to do our jobs well, and to serve our students and communities. Finally, the only way to win the public investment we desperately need is to organize and build our collective power. Together we can win! Thank you! Feel free to reach out anytime with questions and ideas.

# ASU CHAIR



## **K'Ehleyr McNulty**

K'Ehleyr McNulty (they/them/elle) is a member of the Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation of what is now known as Carmel Valley and Monterey Bay, CA. They are a poet, artist, and scientist currently living and working on the lands of the Akimel O'odham, and Piipaash Nations. As the Senior Coordinator for Outreach Programs for the Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing on the ASU Tempe campus, they hire local artists who provide free, community driven literary programs to Phoenix-Metro area writers and readers. K'Ehleyr is passionate about equity and transparency, and was previously a rank and file member of WFSE and AFSCME in Washington state. Their experiences as a formerly protected, union worker, inform their ideals and vision for what our workplaces can be as Arizona University employees. They will fight for: increased, livable wages for all workers; winning back better benefit packages that were once common-place (such as \$0 employee deduction health care), and ensuring equitable workload and practices for all workers university-wide - responsibilities should remain reasonable and within our work-hours. An active UCW-AZ member since Fall 2023, their contributions include organizing and welcoming new members and serving as the ASU Staff Rep. As a former student worker in California, they are devoted to serving, listening to, and learning from all staff, faculty, and student workers as the ASU Caucus Chair. Join K'Ehleyr in building worker power together and reminding our employers who keeps ASU running.



# ASU VICE CHAIR



**Ian Sherwood**

Ian Sherwood is a senior at Arizona State University studying political science and sociology. He is an active member of both Young Democratic Socialists of America and Students for Justice in Palestine. In his role as a research assistant for the Center for Work and Democracy at ASU he has helped on research projects pertaining to rebuilding the labor movement and organizing the unorganized. He believes deeply in building solidarity between student activist movements and the labor movement. As Vice Chair of ASU, he will help foster a stronger bond between UCW and all of the social justice oriented organizations on campus. He will also help foster trust and cooperation between students and our members. ASU has many student workers who find community in social justice movements, it's time we further embed ourselves in these movements. Ian believes the other activist organizations he belongs to should be viewed as co-equal organizing partners. He seeks to involve them in the decision making and planning behind our various campaigns to improve the quality of life for all ASU students and academic employees. Ian stands for an intersectional labor movement and a wall-to-wall union!



# ASU SECRETARY



**Hilary Harp**

Hilary Harp is an Associate Professor in the School of Art at ASU. In her eighteen years at ASU she has served in a number of governance and administrative positions including several terms as School of Art representative to the ASU Faculty Senate as well as Associate Director and Interim Director of the School of Art. In her current role as President Pro Tempore of the School of Art Academic Assembly she is working to strengthen and formalize faculty governance within the School of Art. She is running for Secretary because she has experience with the maintenance and distribution of meeting minutes. She enjoys record-keeping and believes that these processes are an area where she can effectively contribute to the well-being of the union. She has not had the opportunity to join a union prior to this one, but she believes that workers' only hope for fair treatment lies in union membership. Since she is relatively inexperienced with union organizing, starting out as secretary will give her a chance to learn and possibly move into other roles within the union. She looks forward to building a stronger union together.

# NAU CHAIR



## Gregory Lella

Gregory Lella, a dedicated organizer with deep roots in labor advocacy, is running for the position of NAU Caucus Chair in UCW. Gregory's passion for labor organizing began during his graduate studies in labor history and has been honed through years of hands-on experience. As a department mobilizer for the CWA Local 1104's Graduate Student Employee Union (GSEU) at SUNY Stony Brook, he led initiatives that achieved a 100% membership rate in the History Department, one of the most active within the GSEU. Gregory's efforts ensured consistent turnout for union actions, demonstrating his ability to inspire collective action. In addition to his leadership in GSEU, Gregory has worked as an adjunct instructor and a UUP member, gaining firsthand knowledge of the struggles faced by contingent faculty. His lived experience as an educator and adjunct informs his commitment to fighting inequities in higher education through the power of organized labor. Finally, while a non-tenure track faculty member at Northern Arizona University (NAU), Gregory was a member of the University Union of Northern Arizona (UUNA) executive board and managed UUNA's finances as its treasurer. Gregory was a strong proponent of UUNA's merger with UCW and was excited to help facilitate the massively successful UCW organizing drive at NAU in 2024. Gregory is running for NAU Caucus Chair to bring his proven dedication and expertise to UCW. He aims to unite members, amplify their voices, and ensure the union remains a strong force for positive change.

# NAU VICE CHAIR



**Wes Sleet**

Wes Sleet is currently a non-exempt staff employee at Northern Arizona University working as a Library Coordinator – Senior at Cline Library and has worked at Cline Library for the past three years. They work in the back somewhere at Cline mostly buying physical books for the library for course reserves or different collections, going through materials being donated, or buying public performance rights for films being shown at Cline. Wes is hoping to bring staff issues and matters that effect staff to the forefront and to try to add more staff voices and memberships to the union. They were originally nominated for Secretary but since no one had nominated themselves for Vice-Chair at NAU, they decided to nominate themselves for Vice-Chair. They do not have a ton of leadership experience but they are willing to learn and be engaged. Wes has been with UCW since the NAU chapter joined and has been working with union organizing efforts at NAU prior to joining UCW. Since joining UCW AZ Wes has been attending meetings for the staff caucus and helped out for an afternoon at the recent organizing drive.

# UA SECRETARY



## Nieves Vázquez

Nieves Vázquez is a graduate student in the Water, Society, Policy MS program at the School of Natural Resources and Environment in CALES. They have been a Graduate Research Assistant at the Indigenous Resilience Center since their first semester, working closely with Indigenous faculty working on environmental justice research related to water quality and soil contamination in the Southwest. Nieves serves as a Student Ambassador for the Native FEWS Alliance representing UA, consulting allied staff and faculty in schools nationally on managing scholarship funding for Native students. She serves a supportive and labor role for various student events and organizations in the Indigenous & Native communities on campus throughout the year. Before becoming a student in Arizona, they were an active student member of the Native American & Indigenous Collective at the University of Texas at Austin advocating for safe and physical spaces for Indigenous students. The pressure on UT Austin admin resulted in a break room for Indigenous students to use and publishing a formal land acknowledgment through the university. Nieves is running for UA Secretary to bridge student, staff, and faculty solidarity across campus and through our union. They believe organized power is a tool for stronger and safer communities. As UA Secretary, Nieves will use their active presence on campus with students, staff, and faculty to increase union membership numbers. They will utilize their passion for storytelling to keep members engaged through their notes and retelling of member meetings and other important events on campus