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## Adjunct Faculty at Champlain and Burlington Colleges Vote Overwhelmingly to Join SEIU/Adjunct Action

*Part-Time Faculty in Vermont are Latest to Join a National Movement to Raise  
Standards in Higher Education*

Burlington, VT – Adjunct professors at Burlington and Champlain colleges have voted overwhelmingly to join adjunct faculty at schools across the country in SEIU/Adjunct Action, with 80% at Champlain College (118 to 30) and 85% at Burlington College (23 to 4) adjunct faculty voting yes to a union. The vote was a significant step forward for adjuncts in Vermont who are working to improve the working conditions of the increasing numbers of part-time and contingent faculty in higher education in the state and across the country.

Over 40 percent of faculty at Vermont's private, non-profit colleges and universities work part time and 72 percent of all faculty are not on the tenure track. Adjunct faculty, now the majority of teaching faculty across the country, typically have no job security, no benefits and low pay that forces adjuncts to string together jobs at multiple colleges and universities to make ends meet. At the same time, revenues and tuition have increased steadily over the last two decades while spending on instruction has declined – and it's adjuncts and their deeply-in-debt students who are suffering as a result.

Throughout the campaign, adjunct faculty at both schools received an outpouring of support from Vermonters. Senator Bernie Sanders sent a letter of support, as did a number of city council members, state legislators, and the AFT/AAUP-led union representing faculty at the University of Vermont. Hundreds of students and community members signed a petition supporting the organizing efforts, which was delivered to school administrators.

“Ever since we started the process of forming our union, I've been feeling more and more empowered. I'm already noticing that we adjuncts are talking to each other a lot more, and we have a much greater sense of collegiality. I no longer feel marginalized on campus,” said Betsy Allen-Pennebaker, who teaches at Champlain College. “I think that this victory today is a wonderful thing for adjuncts, not only in terms of pay and job security, but also in how we feel about ourselves and our profession. Throughout this election, we've been talking about all the positive things that will come out of having a union, and that's what we'll continue to focus on as we move forward. I really believe that this union is a win-win for everyone. What's good for adjuncts will also be good for Champlain College as an institution – and improving adjuncts' working conditions is going to create an even better classroom experience for our students.”

Vermont adjunct faculty are following in the footsteps of adjuncts at more than a dozen universities who have joined Adjunct Action in the past year, including The College of St. Rose in Albany, New York where adjuncts voted to join SEIU Local 200United this summer. They join faculty at the Howard University and Georgetown University in Washington, DC, Antioch University in Seattle and Northeastern University in Boston who have all voted for unionization in order to strengthen their voices and improving working conditions for all part-time faculty in America.

“I am thrilled by the results of the vote and I am looking forward to what is to come for Burlington College and the wider teaching community in Vermont,” said Jonathan Ayer, who teaches at Burlington College. “The campaign aimed at highlighting the need for sustainable pay, access to

benefits and stable working conditions for the adjunct faculty, and this vote is one step on the path to making these things happen. I really am excited to work with the administration, my fellow adjuncts and the full-time faculty in the hopes of continuing to better Burlington College by bettering the teaching conditions, which will undoubtedly result in bettering the learning conditions for our students.”

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*Adjunct Action is a project of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), home to over 22,000 unionized college and university contingent faculty who have won improvements in pay, job security, evaluation processes, and access to retirement benefits. Visit [Vermont.adjunctaction.org](http://Vermont.adjunctaction.org) for more information. Visit [Vermont.adjunctaction.org](http://Vermont.adjunctaction.org) for more updates.*