

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Kean University Faculty, Staff and Students Oppose Campus Outsourcing

Threat to quality, safety, campus security and standing in community posed by misguided practice

UNION...A unified campus community is calling on Kean University President Dawood Farahi and the Board of Trustees to stop outsourcing vital campus jobs as part of a good-faith effort to restore the University's standing in the community, save money and safeguard campus security. "Outsourcing of skilled trades and janitorial services at Kean is simply costing way too much," said Kean mechanic Steve Pinto, chapter President of the International Federation of Professional, Technical Engineers (IFPTE), local 195, which represents approximately 135 janitors, skilled-trades workers, security officers and campus transportation workers. "Our members are committed to the campus and to Kean so it is a mistake to replace them with outside contractors, who cost more and can do less."

The campus union of professors, professional staff and librarians is joining a solidarity effort with the IFPTE over concerns with quality and safety. "Janitors and skilled trades workers are vital contributors to the campus community and having a stable workforce is critical to University operations," said Kean Federation of Teachers (KFT) President James Castiglione. "The people who literally keep the lights on and the rooms clean and safe at the university are long-term employees who know the campus, its operations and, most importantly, its people."

Students are joining the opposition to outsourcing. Senior Political Science major Moyjohn O'Connor is concerned that the practice undermines the security he has felt with campus workers. "Once, I lost my backpack with my laptop," said O'Connor. "Naturally, I was extremely concerned about losing a valuable possession and all the work I had stored. The campus security officers were able to help me by immediately calling around campus to put the alert out and locate my bag." According to Pinto, a 30-plus-year University employee, that type of security exists because the workers are vested in the institution and know who belongs on campus.

Unfortunately, the unionized workers were replaced on the University's East Campus after the campus underwent extensive renovations. Pinto alleges that Meridian Property Services is charging the University hundreds of thousands of dollars more than the cost of employing dependable, local workers. Night shift janitorial operations were already outsourced and Pinto raised concerns that work orders are being misdirected to idle skilled trades workers and justify outsourcing.

The KFT executive board is joining with IFPTE and other campus groups in opposing the outsourcing and calling for Kean University management to respect the remaining workforce and existing contracts.

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The International Federation of Professional, Technical Engineers (IFPTE), local 195, represents approximately 135 janitors, skilled-trades workers and security officers at Kean. The Kean Federation of Teachers represents approximately 500 full-time faculty, professional staff and librarians at the university. For more information about the KFT, please see www.kft2187.org.