



September 2023

Welcome to our September Branch Newsletter

This newsletter is to keep you up to date with a number of things that your Branch Committee has been involved with this year.

Day of Action



The TEU National Day of Action was held on Thursday 14th of September. This was a nationally coordinated action to highlight the parlous financial state of the tertiary sector as a whole. Our event was attended by TEU members and Labour ILM candidate Sarah Pallet, TOP NZ candidate Raf Manji and Christchurch Central MP Dr Duncan Webb. Unfortunately, the ILM National Party candidate was unable to come.



The Branch Committee acknowledges that here at the University of Canterbury we do not have a financial crisis but we stand in solidarity with other TEU Branches around the country who are facing savage cuts to their funding. The increase in sector funding announced by Minister of Education Jan Tinetti in May appears not to have impacted any of the affected institutions to any great degree.

Photos of the Day of Action meeting by Samantha Armitage.

Farewell to Gaby

As sadly previously reported to Branch members by email, our organiser of seventeen years, Gabrielle Moore, has retired from TEU service. Many members will know Gaby as she was an active presence on Campus and not afraid to stick up for members. The Branch Committee had a farewell celebration attended by Irena Broens from TEU National Office.

As organiser Gaby supported the Branch through *Project Star* the massive 2010-2011 University restructure, a traumatic period for many members and also for our institution as a whole. Gaby's dedication often saw her on site for early morning cleaner's union meetings.

Last year's bargaining round was ably led by Gaby who did the lion's share of representing the TEU position in the actual bargaining sessions.

Thank you Gaby. We wish you all the best in your retirement.

Photo: Branch President Rob presenting Gaby with a gift from the Branch (photo: Rebecca Fisher)



TEU Canterbury Branch AGM

Thanks to all those members who attended the recent branch AGM. Branch Co-president Rob Stowell presented the following report to members.

TEU UC Branch AGM Co-presidents Report 2023-2023

Another year, and it has been momentous for the branch. A year ago, we were in the thick of bargaining, across all 8 universities. On Oct 6, along with colleagues across the country, we went on strike, followed by a week of industrial actions. It was great to see the unity across all members and branches. Our UC settlement had some wins. There were big jumps for the general staff bands. We might have wanted more, but

what we settled for was still at the top of the university settlements: 3.5- 4% when the Govt only raised funding 2.7% funding for tertiary education needs a significant boost and is an ongoing issue that collectively the union is trying to strategize how to get any government - Labour or National led – to address. We look forward to a very strong campaign next year.

On the back of last year's campaign, we've seen a strong uptick in membership, to currently about 1280. Every new member gives our voice extra weight. We are happy that increasingly our colleagues see the collectivism of unions as a worthy ideal, pursuit, or simply strategy. Some of the increase in membership here is due to negotiating to expand our coverage, to tutors, lab assistants, research assistants and post docs on short term contracts. There's work to do in this space. We'd like to see better pay rates for our colleagues in precarious work. But we have negotiated sick pay and other entitlements that were previously not available.

Over the year we've continued to stay in touch with members, with events, newsletters, and regular Tuesday lunchtime drop-in sessions. Keep talking to us. We need to hear your voices, and we have further planned for outreach to members in 2024.

TEU's pay equity claim is continuing through the legal hoops; in April we held a workshop around progressing it.

In May, after considerable debate, Te Hautū Kahurangi /TEU opted for a co-governance model - the first union in Aotearoa-New Zealand to do so. As co-branch presidents, we can affirm that this can work very well. The proposal did not pass without some rigorous debate - something we view as a positive.

We were delighted to see former branch president Jack Heinemann re-elected to the UC council, where we're confident he'll be a strong voice for staff.

At the end of May we farewelled our TEU branch admin Colleen.

We're starting look at workload issues and inequities across UC, kicked off with a short survey. Of the respondents, it's fair to say the majority were not happy with their workload.

In August we said a fond farewell to Gaby - Gabrielle Moore, UC's organiser for 17 years. Everyone will have a Gaby story. She's been the heart of the branch for as long as we can remember. Staunch defender of workers, comforter of the lost or strayed, with a quick eye for a legal argument, and a penchant for a pink tūtu, we will miss her terribly. But all is not lost!

We're delighted to welcome Thaddaeus as our new organiser. He brings a steady hand and - for a "young un" - depth of experience to the role, having studied here (MA

English) tutored here (English and History) and worked in the disability team, before he saw the light and took a job at TEU.

And this morning - we joined a nationwide stop work meeting, in solidarity with our colleagues across Aotearoa, whose jobs are under threat, and to send a strong signal that our tertiary sector is severely underfunded.

A big thank you to all our branch committee, members, friends, and supporters. When times get tough, unity really matters. That's 2023 in a nutshell - so far, at least. Here's to 2024.

Rob Stowell/Garrick Cooper

The minutes of the AGM were presented to the subsequent Branch Committee held on Thursday 28th of September for approval and also sent to National Office. Members who would like a copy of the minutes are invited to email the Branch secretary.

Workload for Academic Staff

The survey results have been under consideration of the branch Committee. It is hard to imagine anyone being surprised that the results indicate significant variation across respondents and across Schools / Departments here at UC. As this is a busy time of year the Branch Committee will give a summary of the results in our next newsletter. The University is also working towards a clear and transparent workload model for academic staff. For further information please email Branch committee member steven.giese@canterbury.ac.nz.

2023 Whakangau Whai Taonga | Treasure Hunt

Our last Branch newsletter included TEU member John Silver's response to the recently released UC financial report. John set a challenge to readers to find the lost \$16 million dollars in small change (or the larger amounts of 28 million dollars or 31 million dollars) between 1st January 2022 and 31st December 2022 (see pages 12, 72, 73 of the report: [Te Pūrongo ā-Tau | Annual Report about 2022](#)). So far no one has come forward with an explanation. So the mystery endures...

Congratulations to new staff members on UC Council

The Branch Committee is happy to congratulate academic staff member Professor Jack Heinemann and general staff member Catherine Woods, on their election to the University Council in the elections held during July. We are confident that both are well suited to the role and will work for the good of the UC community.

TEU Office

Planning is underway at TEU National Office to put a new organiser into our Christchurch Office although this may come with some reorganisation of roles. Our current organiser Thad is still available to support UC staff. Advertisements are scheduled to go out on Monday 2nd October.

TEU websites of interest

TEU National webpage: <https://teu.ac.nz/>

TEU Canterbury Branch Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StandUpForUC>

Academic Freedom Aotearoa: <https://www.facebook.com/academicfreedomnz/>

Our Collective Employment Agreements are available online

<https://teu.ac.nz/branches/universities/canterbury/> or

<https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/about/hr/employment-agreements/>

Your 2023-2024 Branch Committee

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Co-president	Rob Stowell , Future Learning and Development rob.stowell@canterbury.ac.nz ext: 94044
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Te Uepū Academic Staff Representative	Ngaroma Williams , School of Teacher Education, ngaroma.williams@canterbury.ac.nz , ext. 90880
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Youth representative	Thomas Li , Jack Erskine 720, thomas.li@canterbury.ac.nz ext: 93052.
Active Members	Steven Gieseg , School of Biological Sciences steven.gieseg@canterbury.ac.nz ext: 95599 Ryan Dooley , UC Central Library, ryan.dooley@canterbury.ac.nz ext 91220. Craig Herbold , School of Biological Sciences, ext. 92692, craig.herbold@canterbury.ac.nz

Life members of TEU Canterbury Branch

Janinka Greenwood, Neville Blampied, Bill Rosenberg, Warwick Anderson, Bob Gordon.