

UCU NEC elections: Vote Rhiannon Lockley for Midlands (Further Education)

FOR A DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGNING UNION TO CHALLENGE AUSTERITY

As a region we in the Midlands face huge challenges under austerity: the third highest child poverty rate, the highest proportion of working-age adults with no qualifications, and the far right gaining popularity, with the EDL regularly targeting us and 4 UKIP MEPs and many councillors elected this year. We can only take on these challenges by working together.

During my time as a regional officer I've worked to build links with student and community groups, supporting the NUS "Bring back EMA" campaign and organising bedroom tax demonstrations, both of which have had an impact on Labour Party policy. We have to challenge racism wherever we meet it, and we have to make a clear case for the alternative to austerity to take on the despair which drives people to the right. In my Regional role I have helped co-ordinate a strong UCU presence whenever the EDL have mobilised, and was also an organiser for the Black Country Love Music Hate Racism festival.

As branch secretary during the Halesowen 4 dispute, I saw what solidarity is all about. Across our region and around the country, members pulled out all the stops to stand with us. I was honoured to pay some of this back when I helped our retiring NEC member coordinate



the Midlands tour for Lambeth UCU this year, getting them into branches to meet members, and organising a fundraising evening. If elected I will use everything I've learned to strengthen national links supporting branches. No-one should ever feel like they are on their own.

I am a young part time worker. Many of us struggle to participate, with childcare and awkward timetables making meetings difficult. The gender pay gap now stands at 19%, with black and disabled women earning the least. The members most exploited in FE are those most vulnerable during action - those on zero-hours contracts. Job insecurity and ever increasing workload are the biggest threat to members, and have to be tackled.

We can only take on these things issues as a union founded on democracy, equality, unity, and hope. I am a UCU Left supporter, and if elected I will defend the democratic

processes of our union and work to retain national bargaining. We have to listen to ALL members: I believe that a ballot where all members have a vote is the democratic way to decide on action, and that the decision made by the Special Conference in December to pull action mid-ballot, and to cancel the ballot before we knew the outcome has disastrously undermined this democratic process and left many members confused.

While one-off action like last year's pay strike gains us limited improvements (like the removal of the strings from last year's offer), when we take no action we limit our negotiators, and it is unfortunate that in the run up to the election the decision was taken without a mass vote to abandon the long term pay campaign strategy. I believe members need to be more aware of our successes and if I am elected I will work to engage with members across the Midlands to highlight and celebrate everything we achieve together. We will only recruit to the union of the future with clear long term strategies and the hope that comes from meaningful action.

Elections run from 2 February to 27 February

Vote Rhiannon Lockley 1, Allister Mactaggart 2

Please vote for the following candidates in the national officer and NEC elections

President Scotland: Carlo Morelli
UK Elected HE: Marion Hersh, Carlo Morelli, Jeff Fowler, Eleni Michalopoulou
North West HE: Jo McNeill, Chris Sheehy

LGBT HE: Pura Ariza
Casually Employed members (HE): Vicky Blake
UK Elected FE: Mandy Brown
North West FE: Nina Doran

Midlands FE: Rhiannon Lockley, Allister Mactaggart
Casually Employed members (FE): Amy Jowett
Trustees: Alan Whitaker, Angie McConnell

(Please note that all members can vote in the elections for Equality, Casually Employed members' and Trustees seats)

STV voting system

To maximise votes for progressive candidates we ask you to do the following:

- Please use your votes to **first endorse all UCU Left candidates** and only after that use lower preferences for other progressive candidates in each relevant list; and
- Give your highest preferences in the UK-Elected list to UCU Left candidate(s) **from your region**

Find out more at www.uculeft.org