



AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, LOCAL 212

Milwaukee Area Technical College
Affiliated with AFT, AFT-WI, AFL-CIO & MALC



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Press Release

AFT Local 212: TRUMP BUDGET A JOB KILLER

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American Federation of Teachers Local 212 has issued the following statement on Trump's education budget cuts. Local 212 represents faculty and academic staff at Milwaukee Area Technical College.

The union representing faculty and academic staff at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) slammed President Trump's budget for destroying jobs and contributing to the skilled worker shortage in Wisconsin.

"President Trump's budget will harm tens of thousands of Milwaukee area students and workers who attend the MATC and undermine the ability of the Wisconsin economy to create jobs and grow," said Dr. Michael Rosen, Economics Instructor and President of MATC's faculty union, AFT Local 212.

"Trump's proposal raids Pell Grants and slashes Work-Study and Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) funding. These are programs to help Wisconsin's low and middle income families access and succeed in higher education," Rosen asserted.

"It is unconscionable to slash programs that create a pipeline of skilled and technical workers at the very time that Wisconsin's employers are complaining that we have a shortage of these middle skill workers," according to Rosen.

Rosen explained that 67% of MATC's 40,000 students rely on Pell Grants to help pay for their education. By raiding Pell Grant funds, Trump eliminates the possibility of summer Pell, jeopardizes the programs' long-term sustainability and harms the prospects of low-income students.

More than two hundred MATC students participate in the college's Work-Study program that allows students to master program related skills and engage in other important work while remaining on campus. More than three hundred of the Pell students were also awarded FSEOG funds for the 2016-2017 school year.

Dr. Lisa Conley, Biology Instructor and Executive VP of Local 212, explained, "These students are earning while they learn. If Trump's cuts are enacted, tens of thousands of these students nationwide will be forced to drop out of school. "

The cuts will cause student debt, already a major obstacle to college completion in Wisconsin, to soar. Between 2004 to 2014 as UW and tech college state funding was cut, including Governor Walker's unprecedented 30% cut in tech college state funding, and the average debt of college grads in Wisconsin jumped from \$16,560 to \$28,810. That 74 percent increase was higher than in all but six states. Wisconsin now ranks higher than all but two states in the proportion of students — 70 percent — with debts, Conley said.

Luz Sosa, a graduate of Whitefish Bay High school and Marquette University, is an Economics Instructor at MATC with over \$70,000 in student debt. "Even with Pell Grants, work study and other federal programs, working class students are going deeply into debt just to stay in college. The Trump cuts will make this already serious problem much worse."

Sosa continued, "His kids and grandkids will be able to pursue higher education, but Wisconsin's working and middle class students will be left out in the cold."