



Merit - South (vote for up to 2)

(all Merit members can vote for both North and South Candidates)

Name: **Andrew Fena**

Nominated for: Merit South

Where do you work and what do you do?

Duluth GSC I work in the adult mental health unit doing primarily civil commitments.

How long have you worked for the County? 20 years

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I have been on the negotiating team three times and the BMOC at least one full term. I have been a steward for most of my working time at St. Louis County and have gone through a number of diverse experiences, from a near strike in 2013 and the subsequent strength we gained at that time, the reorganization of the Duluth GSC, COVID and work from home struggles, and the consequences to our organizing effectiveness. If you are new (and let's face it, there is a lot of new for all of us after COVID) you may have met me on the elevator, asking if you have been invited to sign a union card.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Basic Merit Organizing Committee?

I am outgoing, have a good sense of humor, care passionately about our workplace and the challenges we face, and want to make a better world all the way around. I think unions are a part of the last piece. I am hoping that we can do more to get as organized as we have been in the past, and I recognize that we all face serious barriers and challenges to doing that. I am a problem solver and I generally don't beat around the bush. I will tell you what I honestly think and will work to engage all members in this process. I tend to think of the bigger picture, and I want to help our union maintain and gain strength. I see signing up for something like this as a service to my coworkers. We should all take a turn here and there. For some reason right now this is something I really want to do and think I have experiences and skill that can push us forward in a good way. I want to point out that I have worked in both IIU and ongoing child protection for half of my 20year tenure here at St. Louis County. I also worked 4 years for Carlton County. I know the challenges we all face and want to help make things better for us, our clients, and our community. I would really appreciate your vote in this process and hope you will trust me to engage our union during the off season when negotiations are not happening. I think that is the time to get organized and keep the membership engaged. Thank you.



Name: **Teri Kesti**

Nominated for: Merit South

Where do you work and what do you do?

Duluth GSC I work in CFS in Intensive Family Based Services, primarily supporting all the areas of CFS through parenting education and individualized family support and engagement.

How long have you worked for the County? 9 years

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I am a Union Steward and have become more increasingly involved, particularly over the last year. The longer that I have been with the County, the more I recognize the importance of our Union and the protections and benefits of organized labor. I am looking forward to becoming more active and learning more as I go!

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

BMOC is all about organizing and communication, and those are areas that I am naturally interested in. I want to support the growth of our active membership and invite our members to have a role within our Union. I firmly believe that people will come to the table if they are invited, and activism can increase when others understand there are roles that fit their talents. To me, leadership means creating space for people to become engaged by clear communication, gratitude, and creativity!



Name: **Kim Welhaven**

Nominated for: Merit South

Where do you work and what do you do?

Duluth GSC I am a social worker in the Children and Family Services Division with the Family Support Services unit.

How long have you worked for the County? Almost 12 years

What experience do you have with being involved in our Union?

I have been a union member since I began working at St. Louis County. I have attended multiple meetings, voted, volunteered at the ballot boxes, and passed out flyers. I was also an AFSCME union member for almost 6 years with my former employer in Douglas County, Wisconsin, until the union was dissolved in 2011. I was also actively involved and was the President for a couple of years.

Why do you feel you would be a good team member on the Negotiating Team?

I understand the importance of being in a union and how imperative it is to remain strong by recruiting others to join. I am a team player, and I'm willing to do what is needed to get the word out about the union, upcoming meetings, recruiting, and helping out wherever it is needed. I do not take for granted the importance of a union and the benefits that we have fought for. I have seen firsthand what it looks like when a union is dissolved and how quickly the benefits that were contractually agreed upon get clawed away and are no longer honored. I would be honored to serve on the BMOC committee.

