

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Rutgers Staff Union Says No to Illegal Layoff**  
*Administrative Assistant Targeted for Union Activity*

NEW BRUNSWICK...When administrative assistant Leslye Lowen reported as usual to Rutgers' Cook Campus on June 19, she received a layoff notification. Such a layoff would have been considered unfair the previous year, but a new contract this year gives Lowen the opportunity to challenge the measure. So instead of going quietly into an uncertain job market, Lowen turned to her contract and is standing with her union members to demand justice.

"This is a clear attempt to fire an active union member for exercising her rights," said union president Lucye Millerand. "So we immediately filed a legal challenge against her layoff." Lowen and the union can utilize the grievance process as well, but her boss Michael J. Pazzani has refused to honor the contract and return her to work.

On June 6, Pazzani's unit created and posted a new administrative assistant position for outside hire. On June 13, Pazzani transferred an administrative assistant with less seniority than Lowen to what he termed a new position reporting to him. Less than one week later, Pazzani's department instituted the layoff against Lowen, under the pretense that she then had the least seniority.

Lowen had been an active member of the newly formed union from the onset of an organizing drive last year. She became a union steward in the department and assumed a committee chair position in the union.

If not returned to work, Lowen's last day on payroll would be August 13. She stands to lose benefits accrued over nine year at Rutgers. Millerand called on the University's Human Resources department to order Pazzani's unit reverse the unfair layoff. "Discriminating against a worker for participating in a union is illegal under state and federal law," she said. "It is not consistent with Rutgers' or American values."

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*The Union of Rutgers Administrators-American Federation of Teachers, (URA-AFT) Local 1766 formed in 2007 and includes more than 1,900 administrative staff workers at Rutgers University who voted to unionize. The diverse group includes several hundred titles ranging from administrative assistant to assistant dean and including project managers, program coordinators and community assistants. URA-AFT members work in academic departments advising students, community outreach programs, research institutes and perform a host of business functions throughout Rutgers University campuses and offices in every county of the state.*

