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Claudine Wilkins-Chambers
Local 3429
New Haven Paraprofessionals

Wayne Wysocki
Local 1303
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Tony Zona
Local 407
*Municipal Law Enforcement
Officers*

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MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM WORKERS FILE FOR UNION, SEEK VOICE IN MUSEUM'S FUTURE

Mystic, CT – Today, AFSCME Council 4 is proud to announce that we have filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board on behalf of workers at the Mystic Seaport Museum who have chosen to form a union. We are honored to stand alongside these dedicated professionals as they exercise their right to organize and secure a meaningful voice in their workplace.

Mystic Seaport Museum is the largest and most prominent maritime museum in the country, enriching the historic and educational experience of visitors every day. The workers who power the museum dedicate themselves to preserving our history, teaching the public about our maritime heritage, and caring for ships and artifacts in our very own waters. Despite their commitment, workers are increasingly concerned about their future at the Museum. They have long sought stronger job security, more affordable and reliable healthcare, and wages that reflect their skills and contributions. These concerns have grown as employees have faced unanswered questions about the Museum's financial realities. Instead of engaging collaboratively with staff to address these issues, the Administration recently implemented layoffs and cuts to key visitor programs—decisions that have damaged both the museum experience and its long-term standing. The workers of Mystic Seaport Museum believe in the mission of the institution, and they are committed to building a stronger and more stable future for the Museum and everyone who depends on it.

Mystic Seaport Museum employees want what every worker deserves: a voice in their working conditions and honest answers about the finances of their workplace. According to Ashley Giordano, a docent at the museum and one of the incredible activists leading the charge to organize her colleagues in pursuit of a better workplace: “Mystic Seaport Museum is a great place to work, but it could be an incredible place to work. We need more protections for our staff and a voice to ensure the museum continues to be a place that visitors want to go to! The thing that makes the museum so special is the people who work here. Time and time again, that is what visitors say they value the most. I believe the way to keep a dedicated workforce at the Mystic Seaport Museum is to Unionize.”

The workers at the Mystic Seaport Museum want to help rebuild and revitalize the museum, expand programming, and create offerings that bring visitors back season after season. Our union looks forward to a collaborative and respectful relationship with the Mystic Seaport Museum Administration, one where the workers who know their jobs best are finally heard.

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

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We hope that the Mystic Seaport Museum will sign a neutrality agreement to recognize the right of these workers to organize rather than pursue a divisive campaign that will only deepen the challenges facing both programming and the institution itself. But make no mistake: we are ready to fight to ensure these workers are heard, respected, and empowered to protect the programs and staff that make the Museum what it is.

We are proud to announce that AFSCME Council 4 Cultural Workers United (CWU) has filed to serve as the exclusive bargaining representative for the workers of Mystic Seaport Museum, and we look forward to helping put this institution on a brighter path forward.

We encourage the public to join in solidarity with these workers by visiting the Museum and supporting its programs. The museum's patrons—the families, children, and community members who have made treasured memories within the Seaport Village or aboard the Charles W. Morgan—are invested in the future of the Mystic Seaport Museum, and they value workers' livelihoods, their voices, and their right to form their own union. It is time for the community to send a clear message demonstrating that a strong future for Mystic Seaport Museum depends on investing in the institution, and investing in the museum means uplifting the dedicated workers who make it run every day.

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AFSCME is one of the nation's largest unions and leading advocates for working women and men. Our 1.4 million members nationwide, including the 30,000 courageous public servants in Connecticut represented by Council 4, provide the vital services that make America happen, and we believe everyone deserves a chance to fulfill the American dream. AFSCME represents workers across a variety of sectors, from corrections, public safety, and transportation to public works, education support staff, higher education, human and social services, municipal government, and private-sector cultural workers—and our diversity is our collective strength.

AFSCME is also the largest cultural workers union in the country, leading the only nationwide cultural workers organizing campaign through Cultural Workers United (CWU), representing over 50,000 workers across museums, libraries, zoos, and cultural institutions. As the largest cultural workers union in the country—and the only union leading a nationwide cultural workers organizing campaign—AFSCME has built a powerful, coordinated movement to raise standards across the field. CWU members organize for fair wages, job security, and safe working conditions, including workers at major institutions such as the MET and the New York Public Library.

As the union with the most diverse membership in the country, we believe in honoring solidarity without conformity, drawing on each member's unique story to connect individual struggles into a shared, powerful movement for change. That's how we win better lives for ourselves, our families, and our communities. We are honored to advocate for workers proudly committed to public service, regardless of job or sector, and we never quit.

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