

**Velina Manolova, Candidate for Secretary
(she/they, Adjunct Assistant Professor, HMS)**

I am running on the PUFF slate with Darini Nicholas, Elæ Moss, and Jennifer Miller.
www.puff1460.com

I am running for Union office because I believe labor organizing is the most effective and logical way to remedy the inequalities, the divisive hierarchies, and the many faces of exploitation within academia and higher education.

I have experienced these unequal and exploitative dynamics as well as the power of collective organizing as a doctoral student and adjunct at CUNY, and later, an adjunct at Pratt and NYU. The modes of exploitation within a systemically underfunded public municipal university system like CUNY and expensive private institutions like Pratt and NYU manifest differently but arise from the same source: the invisibilization of pedagogical and other academic labor and the manufactured scarcity of academic positions with adequate pay and benefits.

As a member of the Communication and Arts Team (CAT) of ACT-UAW 7902, the Union representing NYU and New School part-time faculty, I mobilized faculty by creating political education social media content and facilitating reading group discussions about systemic inequalities within academia. As Secretary of UFCT 1460, I will open up channels of communication, especially around the contract negotiation process. I will also take the long-overdue step of developing a social media presence for the Union, so that we have a platform from which we can apply public pressure to the Pratt administration.

Pratt would not run without part-time faculty, its most exploited labor force, which makes up 85% of faculty. In most departments and schools, our pay is not competitive with part-timer pay at other NYC institutions. Furthermore, the healthcare and retirement benefits we are offered are dangerously inadequate. While full-time faculty receive better pay and benefits by comparison, their situation, too, leaves much to be desired. Their salaries are not competitive with full-time faculty salaries in one of the most expensive cities in the world; the 15% pay gap between male-identified and female-identified FT faculty at our self-avowedly progressive institution is appalling (see the [Pay Transparency Survey Results](#)); and the expectation of service supposedly covered by their salaries leaves room for further exploitation. Most Union contracts enumerate the rate of pay for every job title. This transparency greatly reduces racial and gender discrimination in pay. Our contract should do the same.

At Pratt, we are in a special position of having one Union that represents both part-time and full-time faculty. This is an opportunity to work toward the abolition of hierarchies and tiers – an opportunity wasted by the current Union leadership. Up until very recently, Pratt's most vulnerable faculty, so-called Visitors, were actively discouraged from joining the Union. This academic year, I have been helping to spearhead efforts to spread awareness about the Union among all eligible teaching faculty through the Delegates' Assembly (where I currently serve as my department's delegate) and faculty organizing, which has coalesced around PUFF.

Like many workers across this city, nation, continent, and planet, Pratt faculty have had enough. Now is not the time for concessions. Now is the time for bold organizing inspired by the historic wins at NYU, Barnard, and The New School. My colleagues on the PUFF slate and I will make the negotiations process open and transparent, and we will continue to recruit faculty until everyone at Pratt has joined the Union.

A Union is only as strong as its members, and we can only win the rights and dignity we deserve if all faculty are invited to the table. If you believe in fair compensation, benefits, and dignity and respect for ALL faculty, vote for the entire PUFF slate: Darini Nicholas, Elæ Moss, Velina Manolova, and Jennifer Miller.