

Name: Kimberléa Ruffu

Pronouns: they/she

Bureau: Parks and Recreation (PP&R), Land Stewardship

Classification: Coordinator II

Before joining PP&R last September, I previously worked as a Communications Manager in the Oregon Legislature shortly after the initial unionization efforts by legislative staff. That process took three years, and a contract was finally (yay, but also yikes at how long that took) ratified this fall. It took me eight years to get through college, but I completed my undergrad focusing on urban planning and public administration during deep COVID. No in person graduation, but the tears still sprang when I received my diploma in the mail! Before and through that I primarily worked in food and customer service, and I've lived in Portland for almost a decade now.

In my personal life I organize with a cute, queer and BIPOC mutual aid garden. We focus on tending to each other and cultivating hate free spaces for us to bloom through offering free field trips, workshops, and other programming. We are also long term building a free community learning garden in SE Portland with an emphasis on designing for access and use. I'd like to begin learning ASL next year, and I'm missing summer fruits like nectarines and mangoes right now. I have a sweet but very diva cat named Marcee, and I also enjoy design, flowers, and dancing.

Honestly, I was hesitant to run for this position as I haven't been able to make it to a bargaining committee meeting yet. I had wanted to participate more in the legislative staff union process, but opportunities were limited by the time I started working there. I'm genuinely curious to learn more about this process. As a new union, this is a unique experience to be a part of, and I am deeply invested in fostering supportive, affirming work environments where folks/employees - regardless of classification - are receiving a living wage, feel safe and respected, have opportunities for skill development and growth (if desired) and have a workload that allows for rest, joy, grief and community care in both their professional and personal lives.

I'm inspired by the legacies and activism of Larry Itliong and Dolores Huerta. As someone who believes in the power of collective organizing to facilitate change, I'm excited to engage in advocating for and with my colleagues across the City for benefits and resources that are meaningful to them. I hope that with this first contract we can

accomplish an outcome that the vast majority of members feel represented by and positive about and which centers/advances anti-racism and equity.