



A Union of Professionals

AFT News Release

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AFT’s Weingarten on the Loss of Former WTU Leader Simons

WASHINGTON—American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten made the following statement on the death Thursday of former Washington Teachers’ Union President William “Bill” Simons:

“Bill Simons was a fighter for civil rights and equality within the labor movement and in the communities he served. The AFT family is saddened by the loss of this true trailblazer who made our union better and devoted his life to improving the lives of Washington teachers and the children they serve.

“As president of the Washington Teachers’ Union, he was the lead negotiator in bargaining that produced the first contract for teachers in the D.C. Public Schools. Throughout his 25 years as WTU president and his long service as a vice president and executive council member of our national union, he was instrumental in the AFT’s efforts to address the needs of children in crisis and break down barriers blocking their success. He helped guide his members and our national union through a time of sweeping social change.

“Under Bill Simons’ leadership, one of the nation’s first federally funded Teachers Centers was established in Washington, D.C., in 1977. Today, it serves as the WTU’s Professional Development Center, carrying on his legacy of career-long support for educators.

“Bill Simons was a founding member of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Washington teachers, students and their families—as well as our national union—continue to benefit today because of his commitment to strengthening communities and his advocacy for African-American workers in our schools and in all workplaces.”

Follow AFT President Randi Weingarten: <http://twitter.com/rweingarten>

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The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of 1.6 million professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Randi Weingarten
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