

The Walters is one of the great treasures of Baltimore, not only because of its extraordinary collection of artworks, but because of the dedicated, talented staff who care for these collections and help to tell their stories. As city workers at a city agency, we deserve the same guaranteed rights to collective bargaining as virtually all other city workers. We urge the city council to amend the municipal code to correct this oversight so that we can move forward with a successful union election.

The Walters has recently committed itself to a set of public goals to increase diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. Many workers contributed to the development of these goals and are already working hard to achieve them. The final section of these goals, Build and Support a Dynamic Team, includes many items that are best addressed through collective bargaining and cooperation within a union structure. These include building "a team culture that is based on clarity, inclusivity, and accountability," "a new compensation strategy that is understood by staff and promotes pay equity," "professional development, leadership development, and mentorship programs," efforts to "diversify the staff and support diverse staff and perspectives," as well as "promote new ladders of opportunity in all areas of the museum." The most direct, inclusive, and transparent way to achieve these vital goals is through a single union representing all workers from across all departments in the museum so that we may work together to identify priorities for collective bargaining through a representative, democratic process.

We believe in the Walters Art Museum and support the incredible work of all our coworkers. Forming a wall-to-wall union will enable us to work together in the most efficient manner to achieve the museum's goals and support its mission to be a transformative force in the greater Baltimore area. Not only will this improve the Walters as an institution, but it will have enduring benefits for our families and our communities across Baltimore. Amending the municipal code to enable a union election through Baltimore City sends a strong message that Baltimore supports the arts, supports its workers, and stands ready to move into a more equitable and inclusive future.

Signed,

-Gregory Bailey, Senior Objects Conservator, Walters Art Museum

-Angela Elliot, the Terry Drayman-Weisser Head of Objects Conservation and William B. Ziff  
Senior Objects Conservator

-Eric Gordon, Senior Paintings Conservator, Walters Art Museum

-Glenn Gates, Conservation Scientist, Walters Art Museum