

My name is Tina Smith and I am a nursing lecturer at UCOL in Palmerston North.

I am standing for the position of ITP sector academic rep on National Council because I have held that position for the last 2 years and I believe I have got more to contribute to the position and to the TEU membership.

I have always been a union person and I have been actively involved in TEU for a number of years. At a branch level, I have been on our executive committee for many years. I have served as Branch President for 6 years (2009 – 2015) and as the Women's representative, and I am currently co-vice president.

Nationally, I served on the Industrial and Professional Committee for 4 years and I have been on the National Council for the last 2 years.

What I bring to the position is my strong beliefs in social justice, supporting colleagues and a commitment to publically funded quality tertiary education as well as experience in unionism and in TEU.

I believe that education benefits individuals as well as communities and the economy and that it should be recognised as a public good and not a product that can be privatised. We need properly funded tertiary education where staff have fair and reasonable working conditions. Education should encourage respect and diversity and ensure our country continues to honour the principles of Te Tiriti O Waitangi. It is essential that we maintain the quality of education and retain the great staff in our sector. In support of this view, I regularly speak out to support the needs of the regions, as resources and opportunities need to be available, accessible and acceptable in all areas of New Zealand.

I am proud of the strong professional and industrial voice that TEU has in our sector. We have made significant positive impacts on our sector such as stopping the Education Amendment Act in 2017. But there are many challenges still to face such as the ITP roadmap, Vet review and chronic underfunding. We need to continue to be politically active, strategic and vocal.

I am a strong voice for union and educational issues. I am willing and committed to contributing to the work that needs to be done at national level. For unionism and TEU to continue to be relevant and important to our members we must actively raise and address matters that impact on our ability to do a good job and we need to be active and political to provide quality education for students.