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Americans United f... 2.0 ★



Americans United for Separation of Church and State

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Management speaks bad of the union, instills fear in staff, and wastes donor dollars, - Development Professional Americans United for Separation of Church and State Employee Review

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Jun 18, 2025



Development professional

Former employee, more than 1 year

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AU Collective, the union at AUSCS has some of the most kind, intelligent, inclusive, supportive, and talented people in the nonprofit space.

Cons

As was unfortunately the case for several colleagues, I was one of the staff harass*d and assault*d at the 2024 Summit for Religious Freedom. My experience reporting, asking management for a code of conduct before the conference with none in place once it started, begging them for help and safety after reported incident, and watching them allow the major donor to continue to stay for the rest of the conference and walk the capitol with minors the following day was one of the worst paid experiences of my life.

AU management will only help their employees if legally necessary. Instead of focusing on church-state separation, like their mission, website, and fundraisers promise, management chooses to spend time micromanaging staff, instilling fear in reports, and blame the union for any issues.

As a fundraiser, my goal is to fund talent and impact toward mission and vision of a nonprofit. What is AU's vision? Their board and management refuse to have a vision, and instead forced staff to contort their work and words to fit into the haphazard and selfish preferences that management feels like doing without listening to staff most affected by management demands.

Management at AU is statedly the worst and most condescending the SEIU union reps have ever seen. During bargaining for AUC's first contract in 2024, management's lawyer infantilized, scolded, and gaslit union organizers. HR and senior leadership stood by as complicit bystanders.

Though AUC and individuals have requested a dialogue and conversation about the Palestine, AU management refuses to acknowledge or allow staff to acknowledge the genoci*e, so much so that staff received reprimands if they wore watermelon pins, even if they took them off at first management request. I was forced to remove any physical representation of a watermelon and remove my keffiyeh or be forcibly relieved from work duties necessary for my employment. AU management refuses to

One of the worst examples of management abusing their power to silence staff was when a colleague was suspended without pay for wearing a keffiyeh at the 2025 religious freedom conference.

Church-state separation is an issue platform that several managers use to stand atop for their own gain, whether it be book sales, podcast listeners, or increased political power. I could no longer fundraise for a nonprofit that's silencing staff dissent while outwardly speaking against authoritarianism.

The amount of money AU spends on consultants is abhorrent. I could no longer fundraise for a nonprofit that spends such an exorbitant amount of donor funds on union weakening/busting, s. harass*ment survivor silencing, and alleged NDAs.

Religious News Service reported via an article about board and management power issues, and many staff were and still are too scared to speak in fear of retaliation with the same issues outlined in Smietana's piece taking place as of May 2025.

Advice to Management

Please stop pushing out your most talented staff.



Helpful



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