

Worthington Library

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WORTHINGTON, Ohio — Kristen McCormick and Tara Shiman are two members of the newly formed Worthington Public Libraries United union.

What You Need To Know

- Last week, librarians and staff voted 80 to 10 to form the union, backed by the Ohio Federation of Teachers
 - It's only the second library system in central Ohio where workers formed a union
 - The members will reunite in the coming weeks to take the next steps of negotiating and ratifying a new contract
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"I have experienced working in libraries that are union and non-union, and the benefits of the union are obvious," said McCormick, a Worthington Youth Services Librarian.

They said months of canvassing for support with T-shirts and signs was all worth the effort to find a collective voice.



“Good things happen when all voices are heard. That's when you're going to see staff feel valued, that's when you're going to see you know services and programs really blossom,” said Shiman.

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Both said it was health and safety concerns as well as paid leave policies that made the move to unionize necessary.

“Our employees haven't seen that benefit yet. And because libraries are operated by about 88 percent female staff, we get disproportionately affected by pregnancy and child care, child-rearing, things like that. So any sort of benefit that we can bring in to help parents would be great,” says McCormick.

Worthington Public Libraries United represents about 135 employees at three branches.

The members will reunite in the coming weeks to take the next steps of negotiating and ratifying a new contract.

“The library board and administrative staff respects the decision of the staff and we look forward to working together to make the library even better for both employees and patrons,” saidv Lisa Fuller, a representative from Worthington Libraries.



Shiman and McCormick agree and said they look forward to what the future brings.

“We all are passionate about what we do and we love serving, so the idea of serving for a good cause — something we can all rally behind. And I think that is a sentiment that echos in every library across central Ohio and across the state,” said Shiman.