

GEO MOBILIZATION COORDINATOR CANDIDATE STATEMENT

Dear GEO Members,

Last year, I used my acceptance speech for the Distinguished Teaching Award to ask the Dean of the Graduate School to show his appreciation for graduate student employees not just by handing out awards for our work, but also by showing respect to our GEO Bargaining Committee as they work towards negotiating a fair contract. It didn't go over too well but it's one of my prouder moments at UMass. I'm running for the position of Mobilization Coordinator because I want to help other graduate students see themselves as workers and fully embrace the idea that UMass works because we do.

I am, at best, an average GEO member. I pay my union dues, wear my button, show up at protests, grumble about late pay and bad health insurance and rarely do anything about it. Like the vast majority of our membership, I've been content to watch from the sidelines, cheer on our Bargaining Committee, but not get too involved. If the primary responsibility of a Mobilization Coordinator is to supervise membership drives and assist in boosting attendance, I can reach out to inactive members because I know all the reasons and excuses they have for not being involved in GEO activities (I've used most of them myself)—too busy, too intimidated, too apathetic.

Our union has made amazing strides with the support of some of our membership. By revitalizing our membership, by reaching out to incoming student workers and inactive student workers, we can achieve more. As Mobilization Coordinator, I will work on inviting new people into the union. I will also work on improving our ties to the undergraduate student community. We need allies on campus. There are 5000+ graduate students and 20000+ undergraduate students at UMass, but it's not just a numbers game. Our working conditions directly impact the quality of their education. Helping graduate students realize this—helping them teach their undergraduate students about labor relations at the University—will strengthen our union and contribute to our causes.

Thank you for your vote!

In solidarity,

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