

About GEO

Contributed by GEO
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GEO is a unit of United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 2322, based in Holyoke, which also represents manufacturing, day care, human service, and fundraising employees. We are also part of the UAW international union based in Michigan. Through our local and the UAW, we have access to experienced staff and the UAW's research, health and safety, and legal departments; help with negotiations, grievances, and arbitration; political action; education and training; union publications and more.

If you're a Teaching Assistant (TA), Teaching Associate (TO), Research Assistant (RA), Project Assistant (PA), Assistant Resident Director (ARD), Intern, Trainee, or Working Fellow on this campus, you're covered by GEO stipends and benefits.

Graduate employees at UMass have been organized since November 1990, when graduate students voted in favor of unionization and to have the UAW represent them. Then as now, GEO played a central role in the campus coalition to help save the University by fighting budget cuts, which were rather severe at the time. After a 10-day strike in November 1991, our first contract took effect, dramatically improving the working conditions for graduate employees on this campus.

Here are a few things our contract negotiations have gotten graduate students over the course of GEO's history:

- free Health Insurance, including mental health (1991 contract)
- Tuition/ Fee waivers (1994 contract)
- a Reasonable Workload (1994 contract--grad students in some departments had to teach two classes as part of their appointment, whereas now they teach one)
- a Grievance Procedure (1991 contract)
- ALANAA Recruitment and Retention funding
- Childcare
- clearer Sexual Harassment Policies (1994 contract)
- Dental Plan (1999 contract) and a new Vision Plan (starting 2006)

Since the inception of GEO our stipends have tripled