



GEO ALL-MEMBER MEETING

12:30 PM

September 18th

ISC 3rd floor Atrium



2019 Core Focus - Health and Welfare

- Leading up to bargaining, we are focusing on Health and Welfare
- **Core Issues for 2019-2020**
 - Health Insurance
 - Vision and Dental
 - Paid Medical and Family Leaves
 - Mental Health
 - Child Care



Health Insurance

- The cost increase to the Student Health Insurance Plan that occurred over summer is abhorrent. It hurts students, who are already the most vulnerable group on this campus--not just GEO members, but all graduate students and all undergraduate students.
- The Organizing Committee is circulating a petition and planning additional actions in response to this--on behalf of all UMass Boston students.
- UMass Boston should increase transparency and communication to the process, and involve students in the process.
- Additionally, UMass has to recognize that the cost is too high for students to pay while living in Boston... and that students still deserve good health insurance.



Vision and Dental Insurance

- Optional program for all students
- Subsidies available for GEO members (up to \$150 for dental and \$92 for vision)
- Enrollment is very complicated
 - It feels like the university is making it hard to enroll to avoid GAs from using the insurance. GEO fought for these benefits for over 15 years - now that we have them the university is hiding the sign-up links!
- Come see us if you need assistance with enrolling or any questions



PAID FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE (PFML)

- Massachusetts signed into law the Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) Law. This bill places a 0.75% tax on all employees in Massachusetts to pay for family and medical leaves.
- **Students, even state employees, are excluded from this program.**
- We are currently bargaining in a coalition with over 20 other UMass Unions about how the University system provides this benefit
 - We think that since it is a benefit - there should be ZERO cost to employees. UMass should pay the premiums not the employees! We should not be unfairly taxed for a benefit our employer should provide!
- Watch the Grad Advocate for various campaigns we are planning to promote the topic and convince the University that students get sick, have children, and care for families too - and that they need support!



Mental Health

- There is a Mental Health crisis on University campuses all over North America
- GEO's position is that all students deserve proper mental health support!
- Many of us are TAs who need training and processes to help our undergrad students who come to us for help.
 - **As a fellow student, we are often the first staff member they ask for help.**
- Support dogs at exam times and free massages in campus center is nice, but it is only superficial help. People on call in UHS are often busy and over-staffed.
- UMass needs to know that we need support to address this ongoing crisis ASAP!



Child Care

- Last round of bargaining, the university showed no interest in providing child care and family support for graduate workers.
- **THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE.**
- Now UMB has shut the daycare on campus and cancelled support for off-campus child care.
- We need to push and fight for this for all of our members.
- We are organizing a working group of students with children, please come talk to us about how you can get involved in the fight for childcare!



Bargaining

- Bargaining will begin this year. It's a long process **AND we need your support!**
- During our all member meeting this summer the message was clear:

WE NEED TO FOCUS ON IMPROVING STUDENT HEALTH AND WELFARE!

- But we are still working to improve the rights and working conditions for graduate workers
- We will be reaching out to develop a bargaining platform, watch for the survey after Halloween
- What's important to you? Let us know so we can represent you in bargaining.
- If you want to join the bargaining committee, let us know!



Previous Bargaining Success Stories

- Raises of over 50% since GEO started
- 2% raise this year and last year
- Vision and Dental insurance subsidies (~50% now but we are fighting for more this year)
- Protection from discrimination and sexual harassment
 - Previously the University tried to remove these protections
 - We fought back - there is a culture of harassment in higher education that needs to be fixed not ignored!
- Creation of a Scholarly Support Fund managed by students for students
- We fought to make full time jobs 18 hours instead of 20
 - That's 10% less work for the same pay...it's like a raise AND time off work! A double win for us!



Enough is Enough! Convocation Action Oct 2

- The Enough is Enough Campaign: **No More Cuts or Fee Hikes! For True Debt relief at UMB!**
- Convocation Action: UMass invites speakers, donors, and the entire campus community to attend
 - One of the speakers this year is Boston's Mayor - Marty Walsh.
- **GEO WILL BE THERE.** This is an opportunity to show UMass--and the city of Boston--that Graduate Workers are important to UMass Boston's urban mission
- **JOIN GEO AND START THE SEMESTER STRONG.**

ORGANIZED STUDENTS SCARE THE UNIVERSITY...

Let's get spooky...



GET INVOLVED: Elections!

- There are **two** positions open on the GEO Organizing Committee.
- THIS IS THE FINAL DAY (9/18) TO SELF-NOMINATE.
- GEO Organizing Committee Members serve the needs of the GEO membership by organizing, bargaining, resolving grievances, administering the SSF, and ensuring that the employment process for all GEO members goes smoothly. Additionally, we serve a communal function, in which we help organize events that go across disciplines.
- After self-nominations are complete, we have a **two week campaigning period**--we'll have a list of nominees in the office. Read it over, and say hi if you see a member who's running!
- We will have a candidate campaign information meeting



GET INVOLVED: Become a Program Rep!

- Volunteer to represent your program or department
- Program Representatives are volunteers throughout the Graduate Employee population that serve as the first line of communication between the entire GEO unit and the GEO organizing committee
- Program Representatives mean there is a much closer tie between the organizing committee and each individual program—which means there are closer ties between each program!
- **We will have our first program representative meeting at the end of this month! Stay tuned for more details!**



Upcoming Events

- **Friday, 9/20** - Climate Strike at City Hall
- **9/25** - Enough is Enough Stand Out (7:30 -10:00 AM)
- **End of Sept.** - First Program Representative Meeting
- **10/2** - Convocation Action
- **10/7-10/10** - GEO Elections
- **Wednesday, 10/16** - GEO Semester Kickoff and Election Announcement Party!



Problems at Work?

- Being a student worker is difficult. We know, we are all students here too
- UMB makes it more difficult by not making it mandatory to have supervisors get trained on how to manage student employees...they don't have to know our contract and don't always care how they treat us as an employee
- Are you being over-worked? Are you asked to do duties which are inappropriate or unreasonable? Do you need help improving your relationship with your supervisor?
 - **WE CAN HELP!**
- We offer both public meetings and private counselling to help you address work problems early, before they impact your academics or personal life. We're all in this together.
 - Asking for help can be scary... but you won't be get in trouble for speaking to us, and we won't put you into a position that makes you uncomfortable.
- Otherwise, please email us requesting a time to meet. geo@umb.edu



Open Questions

- If you have any lingering questions, please ask!
- This slide show will be available through our website after the event
 - We will also include the Q&A topics and answers

The GEO is your union - WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?

Interested in organizing around affordable housing in Boston? For more resources for students and workers on the margins? Want to start a GEO Queer movie night!?

Tell us! Let's make it happen!



Thanks for attending!

To get in touch with us, email us at:

geo@umb.edu

We're located in Quinn-02-081