

UMASS UNIONS UNITED – FALL BARGAINING UPDATE 9/5/17



Almost all the UMass union contracts expired on June 30, and we are all still in bargaining for new contracts. As the first step in building increased labor solidarity on campus, all the unions on our campus have agreed to share updates with all of our members. Please read, discuss with your co-workers, and stay tuned for further action steps. There are more union members on the UMass Amherst campus than at any other workplace in New England – we have tremendous potential power and deserve our administration's respect.

***All Union Membership Meeting Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at noon ...location TBA.
Mark your calendar!***

USA

USA members face disrespect every day. This disrespect takes many forms— from workplace bullying, to structural inequalities like low salaries and unequal benefits. Some workers on campus get paid domestic violence leave, USA members get none. Some workers on campus walk in the door with four weeks of vacation, while it takes USA members 9.5 years to earn that much. Other workers get longevity raises, USA members do not. **This is classism.**

The University must fully commit to its values of inclusion and equity by rectifying these disparities for ALL UMass employees. Furthermore, the University must stop eroding the programs that

support these core values like Disability Services, FSAP, EO&D, CCPH, and all the other services utilized by employees and students that help them succeed at UMass.

USA workers, along with ALL workers on campus, shouldn't have to demand the respect that they deserve. Solving these issues is impossible when the University slows bargaining to a crawl, and comes to the table without financial parameters or the ability to make decisions. This is not respectful bargaining. **Our work makes UMass work— no matter our gender, age, or race, we deserve respect in the workplace!**

PSU

PSU negotiators have been meeting regularly with management since December 2016. While we usually meet in the center of the state, it was very helpful to meet once at each campus so that our members could tell their personal stories of being bullied, about being denied earned promotions, about crushing workloads without any compensation, and more. We are so appreciative to each of them for putting a face on the issues we are bringing to the table. We have made significant progress on improving language on Promotions and Filling of Vacancies, and look forward to more of this true **bargaining** around our biggest issues. Management has been dismissive of some of our major concerns such as excessive workloads and many members' inability to accrue, record and use comp time. We are very pleased that all the UMass unions put forward essentially identical salary proposals. We are less pleased that management has not responded at all to any of them except to say that if the Governor insists on a zero in the first year, they may want a one year contract.

For Unit B, we have met once with management, where they gave us take back language on vacations and sick time, as well as language that there would be no retro. We meet again next week, and believe that this session will be more productive, since the only thing they have to bargain is improved language.

GEO

Over the summer, while the GEO bargaining team has been working hard to negotiate a fair contract, management continues to come inadequately prepared to negotiate in good faith. We presented our proposals at our first bargaining meeting in April, yet the university has yet to offer any responses to our proposals. Management also unilaterally cancelled our bargaining session on August 24. Months into the bargaining process the university continues to delay; a clear indication that our well-being as workers is neither valued nor a priority for the university. As workers, we have a full understanding of what is at stake: our health, our food security, our academic progress.

MSP

MSP began bargaining in the fall of 2016, and we are disappointed not to have reached an agreement after almost a year of negotiations. Along with the other UMass unions, we are filing legal charges to push the governor's office to release economic parameters. In addition to salary increases, the MSP is hoping to make progress on several issues that would increase **equity** among faculty and staff, and promote excellence in education for our students. For example, Senior Lecturers should have access to the same **professional improvement** leave that professional staff enjoy, and instructors who teach CPE courses should have the same **minimum salaries and job security** as all faculty. We are hoping to negotiate a **fair and transparent process** for resolving salary anomalies, especially those caused by racial or gender inequities. Perhaps most important, we must have clear agreement that **faculty governance** and peer review take precedence in academic decisions and reviews for tenure and promotion. We look forward to working with our sisters and brothers in the other unions to fight for equity and excellence at UMass.

AFSCME Local 1776

While Local 1776's unit B is still waiting for a date for the first bargaining session, Unit A has had several. The reason for the delay on unit B is simple: most members who will sit on the team are not employees during the summer. Unit A has met about 6 times and we presented a large list of proposals. At this point we have made progress on some items with at least 3 tentative agreements at this point. Together with USA, we look to end the classism on campus - domestic abuse leave that is a paid leave for one example. Major modifications to other areas of the contract have been difficult to achieve. Even something as simple as a new dues deduction card has been an issue.