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THE GRAD UNION CHRONICLE

Official Newsletter of
the United Graduate Workers of UNM



September Recap and Looking Ahead

BY ASHLEY BERNARDO

Somehow we've made it to the end of September, and it's time for another newsletter! This month we've elected our next bargaining committee, seen stewards elections across departments, and increased our knowledge on all things labor through events like our biweekly book club and at our September General Membership Meeting.

UGW Members have also been attending organizing events across town and out of state: Area Stewards Max Pagano and Alex Baten, President Ramona Malczynski, and Steward Jadin Moore attended the September 2nd CNMLC Labor Day Picnic where they set up a UGW local 1466 table and spoke with other unions from around the state. President Malczynski attended the General Executive Board of UE as an elected representative, and joined Area Steward Pagano, Director of Organizing Dom Oddo, and Clerical Director Lexi Kenis at the UE Western Regional Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. Even more UGW members have been involved in various protests across campus, fighting for the conditions we know will support us all.



Baten, Malczynski, Pagano, and Moore at Labor Day Picnic



UE Graduate Workers at Western Regional Convention

Looking Ahead:

On Tuesday October 1st (11:30 until 1:30), members of UGW will attend the American Postal Worker Union's Day of Action as they demand better staffing ratios and a better contract for their workers.

On Wednesday October 2nd, the UNM Law School is hosting an Abolitionist Lawyering Panel and Legal Observer Training from 5 until 7pm in Room 2401 at the UNM School of Law Building. Dinner will be provided, so please [RSVP here](#) if you'd like to attend!

On Thursday October 17th, UGW will be launching our bargaining survey with a sticker day! Our bargaining survey is an important part of determining our bargaining priorities with the University Administration this upcoming spring. With this information, we will fight for the contract that best supports the needs of graduate workers now. Howl and be heard!

Have a great October folks, we'll see you in the next issue!

Upcoming Events

Oct 1st 11:30-1:30 PM - American Postal Workers Union Rally

Oct 1st 5:00-7:00 PM - Union Book Club

Oct 2nd 5-7 PM - Abolitionist Lawyering & Legal Observer Training

Oct 15th 5:00-7:00 PM - Union Book Club

Oct 17th All Day - Sticker Day!

Oct 25 to 27th - UE Subregional Conference

Oct 29 5-7 PM - Union Book Club

[\(See more on our website!\)](#)

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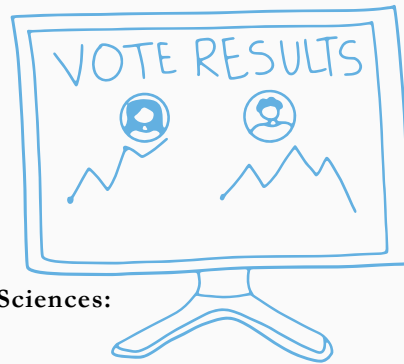
AY 2024-2025 Bargaining Committee Election Results

BY UGW ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Votes are in! We have officially elected Executive Council members and Area Stewards for the following year. The elected positions are as follows.

Executive Council:

President – Ramona Malczynski
Director of Organizing – Dominic Oddo
Treasurer – Oona Takano
Clerical Director – Lexi Kenis
Communications Chair – Ashley Bernardo
Data Chair – Zachary Strasberg



Area Stewards for the College of Arts and Sciences:

Wilber Dominguez
Alicia Esquivel
Max Pagano

Area Stewards for the School of Engineering:

Alex Baten
James “Jay Jay” Rawson

Thank you to everyone who voted in this election!

Please reach out to Abi Granath (absgranath@unm.edu) or Katie Slack (kslack1@unm.edu) if you have any questions or concerns regarding the election.

Know Your Rights - Article VI

BY GABRIEL GARCIA

All grad workers covered by our union’s Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) have enumerated rights, benefits and protections. Each issue, we’ll highlight a section of the CBA so that you know these rights and can take action if they’re ever violated.

Article VI of the CBA grants all graduate workers with an assistantship contract (GAs, PAs, RAs, TAs) health insurance benefits with additional provisions for purchasing optional types of coverage.

Graduate workers who hold at least a .25 FTE appointment for at least half the semester qualify for enrollment in the Graduate Student Healthcare Plan. For reference, a .25 FTE appointment translates to 10 hours per week or more. So a grad worker with an 8 week contract for Fall or Spring that works at least 10 hours per week qualifies for coverage.

UNM is responsible for covering 100% of the monthly insurance premiums for the Graduate Student Healthcare Plan, but students are responsible for provider costs (such as copays, coinsurance, prescriptions, lab fees, etc) when they receive healthcare.

In addition, UNM allows grad workers to purchase additional health insurance to cover dependents.

Finally, UNM also allows grad workers covered by the CBA to purchase dental and vision insurance, but the university encourages students to seek “low-cost” services through the UNM Dental Clinic.

Costs for dependent coverage as well as vision and dental insurance aren’t specified in the CBA.

Grievance Updates

BY NICHOLAS CHAVEZ

As part of the United Graduate Workers of UNM’s bargaining unit, it’s important to be aware of recent actions that your fellow grad workers have taken to enforce our CBA. Here’s a summary of the issues raised by UNM graduate workers and the steps that were taken to resolve them:

FTE Discrepancy: A graduate worker reported that their actual workload exceeded the FTE classification in their contract. They were also not properly trained or provided with necessary materials to successfully do their jobs, forcing them to take on extra, uncompensated time to ensure they performed their contractual obligations at the highest possible quality. Due to their initiation of the grievance process, the grad worker’s contract was modified from a .25 to a .50 FTE contract. In addition, the employer agreed to retroactively compensate the worker for the first two months of unpaid labor. Our CBA mandates that the university provide adequate training and materials at no cost, per Articles 10 and 11.

Excess Workload: Four graduate workers were asked to take on additional tasks beyond their contractual responsibilities, without receiving additional compensation. After an informal meeting with the workers’ supervisors as a part of the grievance process, it was agreed that these workers would not be required to perform extra duties outside the scope of their contract. According to Article 9 of our CBA, only the obligations outlined in the contract via the official LoboWeb portal are binding; any additional tasks are not obligatory and as such would be considered uncompensated labor.

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Think you may have seen a violation of our CBA? [Let us know here!](#)

# Grad Worker Spotlight: Jaqueline Martinez

Each month, we'll be featuring a different member of our local in order to spread awareness and build solidarity around the work being done by the members of UGW local 1466. [Click here](#) to nominate a grad worker for a feature!



*Jaqueline and her cat, Mochi*

**Jaqueline Martinez is a second year PhD student in the Sociology department researching how Mexican immigrant women perceive mental health.**

In addition to her research, Jaqueline grades 20 hours per week as a Graduate Assistant, liaises between the Sociology Department and Sociology graduate students as an elected representative of the Sociology Graduate Student Association (SGSA), and participates as a graduate research fellow of El Puente Fellowship program.

“I’m really busy this year,” said Jaqueline. “I really decided to do it all.”

As an El Puente Graduate Fellow, Jaqueline meets with six undergraduate students each week to help support them in creating a research proposal in addition to all the other materials necessary for applying to graduate school. “The best part of this program is the community,” said Jaqueline. “It’s so exciting; The program very much takes after McNair, and it does a lot to support the students.”

For her work as a fellow, Jaqueline received a \$5,000 scholarship that is paid out in monthly installments. “I’m dedicating about \$500 of my scholarship to pay the participants in my research for their time,” said Jaqueline.

Jaqueline was also a recipient of the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) Student Research Grant this past August. “I’m using [the grant] for my research; I’m paying for the software to help me transcribe [my interviews]... and bought a recorder,” Jaqueline said. “Without this grant, I don’t think I would have been able to afford all of these materials.”

While UGW is Jaqueline’s first time as a card signed union member, she has had experience with the strengths of unionization through her father’s involvement in local 226 of the Culinary Union in Las Vegas, Nevada.

“If it wasn’t for the Culinary Workers Union, my family wouldn’t have had health insurance. My dad wouldn’t have a retirement plan, you know? These things matter a lot,” said Jaqueline. “As soon as I knew there was a graduate workers union on campus, I knew I was going to be a card signer. The union helps make me feel more secure about how I navigate school because I do not overwork. It’s great that we can set these boundaries due to the contract with the University.”

In addition to encouraging more graduate workers to get involved with our local union, Jaqueline hopes that more people will tap into the efforts of other unions in our various communities around UNM.

“I think it’s also really important to stay connected and be aware of other workers in unions nearby or that our families are a part of,” said Jaqueline. “Recently, my dad’s union had a protest and there were some folks that were getting arrested. So if you have time to donate or even \$5 to help with bail, I think that would be really great.”