



United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers

“Many faces, one Union!”

Local 2322

Dear Resident Assistants and Peer Mentors:

To those of you who are returning RAs and PMs, welcome back. To those of you who are new to your positions, welcome to the Union! Resident Assistants and Peer Mentors at UMass Amherst are members of a labor union, Local 2322 of the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agriculture Implement Workers (UAW). The UAW represents tens of thousands of academic workers all over the country—including graduate teaching and research assistants at UMass Amherst, Boston and Lowell, and postdoctoral researchers at UMass Amherst. The RAs joined the UAW over fifteen years ago. Peer Mentors voted to become a part of the RA Union last spring. The Union is a member-driven organization that bargains collectively over pay, benefits, hours and working conditions.

The first order of business for new and returning RAs and PMs is to vote to approve the new contract. The RA/PM bargaining committee worked really hard and is proud to recommend this contract for ratification. You can find the existing contract on-line at uaw2322.org. Attached to this letter is a summary highlighting the most important changes that you will be voting to ratify at a special Union orientation meeting on Thursday, August 25, at 11 am immediately after and at the same location as your morning UMass orientation session in the Campus Center Auditorium. (For further details on the vote, see the notice on the flip side of this letter.)

The bargaining committee is most proud about a hard-fought change that was won with much struggle. Last year, RAs, PMs and many allies from campus, the community, and organized labor, attended rallies, circulated petitions, addressed the Board of Trustees, published newspaper articles, contacted political officials, met with statewide labor leaders, and much more. We fought collectively and after over 15 years, we finally won basic protections from unfair firing, including a just cause standard, the right to arbitration, and protection from loss of campus housing (for RAs) if a firing is contested by the Union.

Congratulations to the RAs and PMs who participated in the fight for this contract. I look forward to seeing you all on August 25 and working with you this year. If anyone has any questions about the contract, the ratification vote, or the Union, please feel free to contact me.

In Solidarity,

Jocelyn Silverlight
President, UAW Local 2322

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**NOTICE OF CONTRACT RATIFICATION VOTE
RESIDENT ASSISTANTS/PEER MENTORS UAW LOCAL 2322**

There will be a ratification vote on the Tentative Agreement reached between the UAW/Local 2322/RAU (“the Union”) and UMass Amherst to modify the previous collective bargaining agreement between the Union and UMass. The new collective bargaining agreement will be effective from the date of execution by the Union and UMass (following ratification) until June 30, 2018.

The ratification vote is open to all current Resident Assistants and Peer Mentors in the bargaining unit represented by the Union. Proxy voting and absentee balloting are not permitted.

POLLING LOCATION:

**DATE:
THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2016, 11 AM
CAMPUS CENTER AUDITORIUM**

A vote count will take place immediately after the polls close. All are welcome to attend. The results will be posted on www.UAW2322.org immediately after the count.

The Tentative Agreement includes a service fee provision. Under Massachusetts law, if the Tentative Agreement is ratified by a majority of those who vote, the service fee provision will require that bargaining unit members who choose not to join or maintain membership in RAU pay a service fee in lieu of membership dues as a condition of employment. Union membership dues for bargaining unit members are 2% of wages. The service (agency) fee is currently 1.81%

The current collective bargaining agreement and the tentatively agreed modifications which are the subject of the ratification vote can be viewed on-line at <http://uaw2322.org/ra/>
Local 2322’s most recent financial report, in the form of a balance sheet and operating statement listing all receipts and disbursements of the previous financial year are available for inspection at request by contacting Jocelyn@uaw2322.org

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HIGHLIGHTS OF NEW RA/PM UNION CONTRACT

The RA/PM Bargaining Committee has reached a tentative agreement with UMass on a new contract including major improvements in pay, benefits and working conditions. We are proud to recommend this contract for ratification and urge members to turn out and vote “yes” on August 25th!

Pay Increases

Pay rates will increase by 15.5% for returning Resident Assistants and 16.25% for new Resident Assistants over the life of the contract (which will expire June 30, 2018). Pay rates will increase by returning Peer Mentors will be 15% increase and 12% for new Peer Mentors.

	RA-new	RA-returning	PM- new	PM- returning
2016*	4200	4400	6300	6300
2017	4500	4700	6800	7000
2018	4650	4850	7050	7250

*Retro for returning RAs/PMs

Discipline/Discharge

UMass no longer has sole discretion to discipline or fire RAs and PMs. UMass will be required to prove “just cause” for discipline or firing an RA or PM. RAs and PMs who are unjustly fired will have access to union representation in an expedited grievance process. If a case is not satisfactorily resolved in the grievance process, the Union can request arbitration through a neutral appointed by the MA Division of Labor Relations. If arbitration is requested, RAs have the right to keep their university housing.

Access to All Gender Bathrooms

RAs and PMs shall have a confidential pathway to requesting access to all gender bathrooms and shower facilities

Release Time for Union Business

UMass will pay up to 9 hours/week for up to 3 union-designated RAs/PMs to work for the Union.

Parking

RAs and PMs shall be given priority and not placed on wait lists for yellow or purple lots. In addition, RAs/PMs will be allowed to purchase yellow lot passes for \$40

Maintaining RA Work Schedules

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The Union prevented UMass from extending RA Saturday/Sunday duty shifts to seventeen continuous hours (which would have amounted to a average of 45 added hours per semester per RA, with no additional compensation!)

RA and PM Councils

The Peer Mentors shall have access to a Peer Mentor Council just as the Resident Assistants do. RAs and PMs will not be forced to participate in the weekly campus-wide council meetings.

Access to Res Life Training Committee

The RA/PM Union can designate up to four members to participate in the University Training Planning Committee for RAs/PMs.

Training Time

All additional training required by Residential Life shall be included in the regular working hours of RAs/PMs

Labor Management Committee

Up to 8 members can participate on a Labor-Management Committee to address workplace issues in between contract negotiations