

Dear Friend,

We know many of us are upset, scared, and anxious for the future with the election of Donald Trump to the presidency of the United States. We cannot in good conscience tell you everything will be OK. Our fears are not unfounded that a Trump presidency may mean the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, an attack on unions, discrimination against LBGQTQIA+ people, anti-Muslim bigotry, and more.

What we can tell you is this: we, the Graduate Employees Union, will always stand up for justice, we will always fight for you and work to make Michigan State University a welcoming and just place for our members and our whole community. Together, we have fought hard for our contract, which does not expire until 2019, and which we will use to protect ourselves. We have fought hard for our contract to ensure that -even if the Affordable Care Act is repealed- people with pre-existing conditions will be covered, birth control will still be covered and your families will be able to afford health insurance. We have fought hard for our contract, which forbids discrimination against members because of their race, gender, sexuality or religion. We fought hard for our contract to ensure our rights and dignity are in our own hands, guaranteed by our solidarity.

And if our rights to healthcare, to a home and workplace free of bigotry and hate, to love and marry our partners, to live in the country we call home, or any other should be attacked, we will fight to the very end to protect our members and protect our community.

If they try to limit our members' healthcare or control their bodies, we will fight. If they try to deport our members or their families, we will fight. If they try to discriminate against our Muslim members, our LBGQTQIA+ members, our disabled members, any one of us at all, we will fight. We will fight as we have before, with the most powerful tool we have: solidarity. We will stand up with one voice and we will act knowing that an injury to one of us is an injury to all of us. We will use our contract to protect our rights, and if that fails, we will take direct action. But we will not take one step back.

Our members fought hard this year to elect champions of working people, and while we did not win everything we wanted, we were able to ensure that American Federation of Teachers (AFT) endorsed candidates continue to control the MSU Board of Trustees, so that at least here on campus we have some allies who will work with us to protect our members. We thank our volunteers who went into our community to mobilize voters and support AFT endorsed candidates. We look forward to working with even more of us to fight for justice in our community.

Because now is the time to stick together, to stand in solidarity, and lift each other high. If you are a member, now is the time to get active. If you are active, now is the time to double down- because we have a lot of work to do, and we need all hands on deck to fight. We can't afford not to.

To learn how you can stand in solidarity with your friends and fellow graduate students with your union, please check out our "standing together" page here: <http://geuatmsu.org/standing-together/>

Always in love and solidarity,

GEU Executive Board and GEU Stewards Council