



American Federation  
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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AFT Teachers  
AFT PSRP  
AFT Higher Education  
AFT Public Employees  
AFT Healthcare

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November 16, 2009

To: Members of the Graduate Employees Organization at the University of  
Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

I want to take this opportunity to commend you on the stand you are taking that will result in better working conditions for you, and that will in turn ensure a high quality education for the students you help educate. As you confront the administration today, you are not only standing up for yourselves, you are standing up for thousands of graduate employees around the nation who may one day find themselves in a similar situation. The AFT has long held that universities should provide tuition waivers as a condition of employment for graduate employees. Your actions today send the unmistakable message that we will demand nothing less.

Please know that as you pursue justice for graduate employees, the AFT and its more than 1.4 million members are in solidarity with you. We hope that the University of Illinois administration will come to an agreement enshrining tuition waivers in the GEO contract, allowing you to get back to the important work of providing a top-quality undergraduate education for your students, as well as pursuing your own studies. Together, we know that you will prevail.

Sincerely,

Randi Weingarten  
President

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cc: Ed Geppert, President, Illinois Federation of Teachers