

# The TUGSA Tribune

TUGSA is a proud affiliate of



The American Federation of Teachers

Vol. 7, No. 1

September 2006

## Contents

Letter from the Presidents .....	3
Health Insurance Primer, cont. ....	2
Contract Negotiations, cont. ....	2

## Contact Information

### Office

1510 Cecil B. Moore Ave., Ste. 304  
Tel: 215.235.0512  
Fax: 215.235.0513  
www.tugsa.org  
union@tugsa.org

### Officers & Staff

#### Co-Presidents

Dan Lehman, Political Science  
Wendy Runkle, Criminal Justice  
copresidents@tugsa.org

#### Business Manager

Scott Deacle, Economics  
rsdeacle@hotmail.com

#### Director of Organization

Melissa Lenos, Mass Media  
do@tugsa.org

#### Secretary & Tribune Editor

Anna Peak, English  
apeak@temple.edu

#### Treasurer

Dan Ohlemiller, Sociology  
treasurer@tugsa.org

#### Staff

Andrew Dixon  
April Logan

## Upcoming Events

Welcome Party	Aug. 25
Solidarity March/Rally	Sept. 14

## Contract Negotiations to Resume

*April C. Logan, Lead Negotiator*

Contract negotiations broke off this past May when the administration refused to discuss workload and walked away from the table. TUGSA had proposed that, in the event of a student employee working in excess of her required hours, the student employee should be able to have a third party mediate the matter, rather than her employer. TUGSA began contract negotiations with administration last August; the university-wide TA/RA contract expired this past February.

Early in July, the Temple University administration agreed to resume bargaining with TUGSA. TUGSA and the administration are scheduled to meet August 14. However, it remains unclear whether the administration is now willing to address the issue of excessive workloads. *cont. on p. 2*

## Health Insurance Primer

Health insurance has always been one of TUGSA's primary concerns. Before TUGSA, graduate students received \$400 a year to apply towards health insurance. Under TUGSA's first contract, graduate students can receive free year-round health coverage (details below), and TUGSA set a precedent now followed university-wide by winning coverage for domestic partners. Although our contract has expired, it appears for the moment that health insurance benefits remain in place.

## Summer Insurance Reimbursement

TUGSA recently filed and won a grievance against Temple admin-  
*cont. on p. 2*

## Health Insurance Primer, cont.

istration regarding summer health insurance payments. TAs who have taught over the past three summers and paid for health insurance are entitled to a rebate.

### Plan Options

Graduate students have two plan options: CompSelect and Keystone Point of Service. The CompSelect plan offers mainly catastrophic coverage; the Keystone plan offers more benefits, including regular check-ups, prescription co-pays, and some dental and vision benefits. However, predictably, the Keystone plan costs more.

### Costs

You may receive nine months of coverage free under either plan. If you would like year-round coverage, you still pay nothing under the CompSelect plan; for year-round Keystone coverage, \$65.79 will be deducted each month from your paycheck during the academic year. You should not be charged an additional amount over the summer; if you are, contact TUGSA immediately at [union@tugsa.org](mailto:union@tugsa.org) or 215-235-0512.

### How to Enroll

To enroll in the CompSelect plan, log on to [owlnet.temple.edu](http://owlnet.temple.edu) and choose "Additional Services" and then "Health Insurance." Fill out the form, click "Submit," and print two copies, one for your records and one to take to the Benefits Office. You should also take a copy of your appointment letter and a filled-out Payroll Authorization Form (available on Temple's Human Resources website, given below). The Benefits Office is located on the 6th floor of the University Services Building at the corner of Broad and Oxford.

To enroll in the Keystone plan, you must first choose a primary physician (log on to [www.ibx.com](http://www.ibx.com) for this) and a dentist (a list is provided on Temple's Human Resources website). You then follow the same procedure as you would to enroll in CompSelect.

*For more detailed information, visit [www.tugsa.org](http://www.tugsa.org) and [www.temple.edu/hr/students/index.html](http://www.temple.edu/hr/students/index.html).*

## Letter from the Presidents

To Our Members,

On behalf of TUGSA, we would like to welcome all returning and new Temple University teaching and researching assistants to the 2006-2007 academic year. We hope that all of you had a rewarding and relaxing summer.

Over the summer, TUGSA officers and activists were working hard to ensure our rights as graduate employees. The union's executive board and its negotiations team worked all summer to continue contract discussions. In addition, TUGSA held its annual summer retreat in Center City at the offices of Philadelphia / Pennsylvania Federation of Teachers. During this event, attendees discussed several goals for making TUGSA a stronger and more effective union on campus.

One of the main goals discussed was creating a stronger graduate community at Temple. Due to the enormity of the graduate student body, there are very few avenues of interaction and communication between graduate employees. Furthermore, those of us who have time to join extracurricular organizations tend toward their field of study or discipline. Yet many of us share in the same work-related, financial, and psychological stresses. TUGSA is the only organization that unites all graduate employees regardless of discipline. Along with protecting our rights as workers and bettering the university environment, our goal is also to provide a resource for connecting graduate assistants to their fellow students and employees. With this in mind, TUGSA has been and is committed to organizing events, workshops, and social engagements that bring teaching and research assistants together from across the Temple community.

As a complement to the Teaching and Learning Center's New TA Orientation and Teaching Conference, TUGSA is hosting a party to kick off the fall semester on August 25, 2006 at 1319 Locust Street in posh Center City Philadelphia. Entertainment will include drinks (including beer and spirits), food, music, and dancing. We encourage both new and returning graduate students to come and enjoy the festivities.

In Solidarity,

Wendy Runkle  
Co-President

Daniel Lehman  
Co-President



**TUGSA MEMBERSHIP CARD**

Temple University Graduate Students' Association (TUGSA)  
American Federation of Teachers, Local #6290  
215-235-0512 union@tugsa.org



Yes! I support my colleagues in our efforts to build a strong union. I hereby become a member of the Temple University Graduate Students' Association, and I authorize TUGSA to be my exclusive representative for the purposes of collective bargaining with Temple University.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Campus Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dept. Enrolled: \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. Employed: \_\_\_\_\_

TA  RA  GA  TG  FFF  PT instructor  
 No university funding  Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TUGSA runs on volunteer power. As part of my commitment, TUGSA can count on me to contribute 1-2 hours of my time to our union:

weekly  bi-weekly  monthly

**TUGSA DUES AUTHORIZATION FORM**

To: Temple University  
Human Resources Office  
Labor Relations

I, the undersigned, a member of TUGSA, authorize Temple to deduct all dues payments authorized by the TUGSA Constitution and Bylaws from my pay and to remit the amount so deducted to TUGSA, while I am employed in a bargaining unit position.

This authorization will remain in full force and effect until revoked by me, in writing. Such revocation must be a written notice sent to TUGSA and the Temple Labor Relations Office during the ten (10) business days preceding the expiration of a semester.

As of June 1, 2004, the TUGSA Bylaws set dues at 1.65% of income from employment within the bargaining unit. Dues levels are established by the membership and are subject to change according to procedures defined in Article Thirteen of the TUGSA Constitution. Copies of the TUGSA Constitution and Bylaws are available at the TUGSA office or online at [www.tugsa.org](http://www.tugsa.org).

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_  
Department Employed (please print): \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

TUGSA is a proud affiliate of



The American Federation of Teachers