

FAMU Graduate Assistants United-United Faculty of Florida  
Florida Education Association/American Federation of Teachers  
National Education Association/AFL-CIO

Contact: FAMU GAU/UFF President & Chief Negotiator:  
Johnique Billups Cell: 734-645-0618

The Graduate Assistants United FAMU chapter has reached an agreement with the Board of Trustees on a new contract. This is the first contract negotiated locally with FAMU. Since 1998 FAMU graduate employees have negotiated with the Board of Regents. The last Board of Regents/UFF-GAU contract expired in 2003. On January 8, 2008 the GAU bargaining team came to an agreement with university representatives for a three-year collective bargaining agreement. Salary will be re-opened every year, as well as any two issues each side wants to negotiate.

This contract affects over 400 graduate employees of the university, which include: graduate assistants, research assistants, and teaching assistants. GAU negotiators were able to obtain:

- full coverage for health insurance premium (for the first time)
- a \$1000 increase in the stipend minimum
- a 2% across the board increase raise for all graduate employees

Our contract maintained essential rights and protections for graduate employees including:

- tuition waivers
- a democratic process to address violations of the contract (grievance procedure)

“We are very excited about obtaining health care. This is the first time it will be offered to graduate employees at the university and it is a big step in improving our quality of life. We are proud of this agreement and feel we fought very hard for the interests of the graduate workers at FAMU who give many hours to making this institution excellent,” says head negotiator Johnique Billups. The next step for GAU is to have the new contract ratified (a secret ballot vote) by the graduate employees. Voting sites will be announced soon. The FAMU board of trustees must also ratify this contract before it can take effect.

The full negotiating team was:  
Cynthia Jones, Co-Chief Negotiator  
Arnesto Bowman  
Dinithia Sampson  
Candi Churchill, UFF Service Unit Director