

Collective Bargaining Opening Statement
October 6, 2022

Good afternoon. Thank you to the Union of Grinnell Student Dining Workers for agreeing to begin the collective bargaining process. We've appreciated the opportunity to hear your opening bargaining platform. As this is our first exposure to your positions, we will now begin gathering data and questions and look forward to addressing them with you during our next bargaining session.

I want to begin by introducing the College's Collective Bargaining Team. I am **Brad Lindberg**, Associate Vice President of Institutional Initiatives and Enrollment. My colleagues are:

Clark Lindgren, Chair of the Faculty, Patricia A. Johnson Professor of Neuroscience

Jana Grimes, Vice President of Human Resources

Germaine Gross, Vice President for Finance and Treasurer of the College

Marc Reed, Interim Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer

Mark Watts, Director of Payroll & Student Employment

Frank Harty, College Counsel, Nyemaster Goode PC

We'd like to take a few minutes today to outline our hopes for this process as we move forward. Members of this team, as representatives of Grinnell College, are prepared to bargain in good faith with UGSDW, with care for all students, faculty, and staff at all times.

The goal of this process is to collaboratively reach a collective bargaining agreement (or contract) that enables students, faculty, and staff to focus on fulfilling the College's mission. As stated in the existing contract ratified by the UGSDW, Grinnell College student workers are, first and foremost students, and our mission of excellence in education, a diverse community that respects multiple perspectives, and social responsibility will be at the center of our thoughts and actions.

This is an historic opportunity for the first recognized undergraduate independent student union in the United States to demonstrate that student-run unions can represent the interests of student workers in an efficient and effective manner. It is also an historic opportunity for the College to demonstrate our commitment to a community where all voices are heard – those represented by the Union and those that are not.

That is why the College has collaborated with UGSDW since the Union announced its intention to expand in January of 2022. In the spirit of cooperation, the College did not stand in the way of the expansion activity and worked with the UGSDW on a Neutrality Agreement. This cooperation continued with the college's decision to voluntarily accrete the Community Assistants into the Union.

As we come to the table today to engage in bargaining, we offer the College's guiding principles to UGSDW in the spirit of transparency:

- Using mission-driven decision-making to strengthen the Grinnell College community for all students, faculty, and staff.
- Creating a collective bargaining agreement that recognizes and upholds the individual dignity of all employees at the College, with attention to the mutual respect between student employees and supervisors.
- Providing stewardship of our financial resources, including the endowment, in a way that supports intergenerational equity and focuses the College's resources to benefit students with financial need.
- Ensuring that students have the right to approve or deny release of their private information for use in collective bargaining.

Student employment is a key component of making a Grinnell College education affordable to all. This year, the College has awarded nearly 68 million dollars to students in the form of institutional grants and scholarships. Currently 50.9% of Grinnell College students (829 of a student body of 1629) also work at the College. These students work an average of 34.6 hours each semester, which is an average of 2.2 hours each week that classes are in session. We know that each student's

situation may vary based on individual circumstances, but these are the numbers we are working with today.

As you know, collective bargaining focuses on wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment for those students covered by the Union. Terms and conditions of employment are the rules, requirements, and policies an employer and employees agree to abide by during the employee's service to the employer.

The College bargaining team has worked diligently, meeting with members of our community who work with student employees to develop a set of interests that reflect its needs. As a result, today we will publish a set of 17 bargaining interests that outline how the College will approach negotiating a contract with UGSDW that balances community, financial, and workplace needs. There are copies of these interests available here in the room and they will be posted on the College's Human Resources web site in the Student Worker information section.

These interests outline the College's intention to negotiate a contract that meet our community, financial and workplace needs. As a bargaining team, we will strive to engage in collective bargaining consistent with the neutrality agreement in which both the College and UGSDW agreed to treat all participants "with mutual respect and dignity."

We want to work with the union and create a positive working relationship between students and supervisors. This includes a commitment to an environment free of anonymous and personal attacks and to upholding the codes of conduct set forth in the College's student, staff, and faculty handbooks.

As we begin the process, we again urge UGSDW to reconsider working with us to establish ground rules for these collective bargaining sessions. As recommended by the Federal Mediation Counseling Service (FMCS), during our joint training sessions in August, negotiating and agreeing upon a set of common procedures for the conduct of negotiations will expedite and facilitate the bargaining process. We will publish the proposed ground rules on the web site in the interest of community transparency.

At the request of UGSDW, we are negotiating the wages, hours, terms and conditions of this contract in a very public setting. Along the way there will

necessarily be brainstorming, compromise and disagreement within the complex and sustained work of negotiations. As all parties involved engage in crafting a contract for the first recognized independent student union in the United States representing all student workers, we turn to this community for its engagement and understanding as we work towards a historic agreement.

We look forward to the worthwhile work to come. Thank you.