



Indiana Graduate Workers Coalition
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INDIANA GRADUATE WORKERS COALITION TO HOLD RALLY, DEMAND LIVING WAGE AND UNION RECOGNITION

The Indiana Graduate Workers Coalition (IGWC) is holding a rally for “More Say, More Pay” on Thursday, September 28, at which IGWC will launch a major campaign to encourage graduate workers to sign union cards in support of a living wage and union recognition. The event will take place from 12:00 p.m. until 1:00 p.m. at the Sample Gates.

Currently, IU pays graduate workers a minimum stipend of \$22,000 for ten-month contracts. According to the [Living Wage Calculator](#) from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), a living wage in Bloomington, IN, for a ten-month contract is \$27,973 and the minimum for a twelve-month contract is \$33,568.

For many graduate workers, making a living wage would go a long way in improving their precarious working conditions. Chelsea Brinda, President of the Graduate and Professional Student Government, emphasizes how hard it is to make a living as a graduate worker.

“It's hard for graduate workers to afford rent and groceries on \$22,000, let alone putting money into savings,” Brinda said.

Other workers, like Sabina Ali, a graduate instructor in the Religious Studies Department, believe that graduate education should be accessible.

“I don't come from money,” Ali said. “I think people should be able to go to graduate school at IU regardless of their income or family background.”

Some wonder how the underpaid teaching and research appointments affect IU's reputation. Bryce Greene from the Department of Informatics believes higher pay works in everyone's favor.

“If IU pays graduate workers less than other institutions, won’t they lose the interest of top scholars around the world?” said Greene. “Paying more for graduate contracts makes IU a more competitive university.”

The rally occurs just two weeks after the IGWC celebrated its four-year anniversary on September 12. During those four years, IGWC’s organizing and collective actions led the IU administration to end all mandatory student fees, including extra fees international students had to pay, and raise minimum stipends from \$15,750 to \$22,000.

“When we get together as a group and persistently demand better working conditions, the IU administration ultimately responds,” said Nuzrath Jahan, a graduate worker in the IU School of Public Health. “Why don’t they go ahead and recognize our union? Let’s make it official and permanent. Everyone from the Bloomington City Council to IU’s Bloomington Faculty Council supports our unionization. Why won’t the administration?”

For further questions and correspondence, contact Indiana Graduate Workers Coalition media correspondent, David Garner (david.andrew.garner@gmail.com).

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