

Officer Candidate Statements

President

Kadie Manion

Greetings, Comrades! I'm excited and honored to accept the nomination for President of the GTFF. Currently, I'm a third year graduate student in sociology, and I study social movements, media, and political economy. My involvement in the union includes being a steward for a year, on the Organizing Committee for a year, a picket captain during the strike, and on the COPE. Most recently, over this last year I have served as VP of Political Education. In this role I've been staying informed on political issues that could affect our union and developing ways to educate our members on these issues. I've also thought deeply about our political endorsement process and tried out new ways for doing endorsements in an efficient, inclusive manner, while still recognizing the political nature of our union. I have also served as a delegate this last year to the AFL-CIO Lane County Labor Chapter and as a delegate at AFT-OR Convention. This term I've been working as one of our temporary organizers (with Eleanor Wakefield) to try to fill Amber's big shoes. In order to be best prepared for this position, I've been participating in a Member Organizer Development Program through AFT-OR, through which I've learned a lot of valuable organizing skills.

I have three main goals for as President next year and for our union in general:

- 1) I hope to mobilize, organize, and empower our members by improving the democratic processes of our union and by moving towards a more member-driven, social movement unionism. This would entail further empowering marginalized members and caucuses, as well as increasing transparency, in order to create an inclusive climate for all members. Furthermore, I would like to give our rank-and-file members more active decision-making power and ensure the leadership listens to what our membership needs.
- 2) My second goal is to build solidarity by working closely with campus and community groups to build lasting relationships with them. This includes reaching out more to other graduate employee unions like Coalition of Graduate Employees, and supporting organizing efforts at Portland State University. I would also like to do more outreach to groups attempting to unionize and groups representing marginalized workers, and offer our support and show solidarity with them. The GTFF is a leader in the campus community and the local labor movement and I plan on further amplifying our role as such.
- 3) If we are still in bargaining if/when I take office, I would like to increase transparency with this process and create a more aggressive contract campaign. Recently, I've been helping put together the Contract Action Team (CATs) that will help in publicizing our bargaining efforts and support our bargaining team. I plan on winning the best contract possible for the GTFF.

I plan on building power in the community, on campus, at the bargaining table, and empowering our members and building solidarity along the way. I really appreciate this opportunity to help transform our union and I hope you'll vote for me!

In solidarity,
Kadie Manion

VP for Grievances

Micah Black:

My name is Micah Black, and I'm a second-year doctoral student in the Department of Political Science. I'm currently the lead notetaker for the bargaining team, and also the interim VP of Grievances. I would love to continue serving in this position for the GTFF this following year. I have really enjoyed my time serving on the bargaining team, and it's given me a really close knowledge of the contract, which I believe is one of the most important aspects of serving as the Grievances Officer. My close knowledge of the CBA will be really helpful in ensuring that it is being followed! I'm also really enjoying serving as interim Grievances office, and my experience this term will be helpful if I am fortunate enough to be elected for next year.

VP for Equity and Inclusion

Nicole Francisco:

I am running for VP of Equity and Inclusion. As the current chair for the GEs of color caucus, former chair for the queer caucus, and member of the women's caucus and workers' caucus; I am very passionate about creating mechanisms within the union to empower and foster leadership from groups of traditionally marginalized voices. More broadly, instilling values of equity and inclusion is paramount to the mission of solidarity of the GTFF and unions more generally. I fully believe in the slogans that we shout out at the picket lines, like "when you take one of us on, you take all of us on" and "solidarity forever" and I intend to cultivate those values in the boardroom.

VP for Political Education

Lola Loustaunau:

Compañeros!

I'm Lola, a first year PhD Sociology student from Buenos Aires, Argentina. First, let me confess that one of the reasons why I choose to come to University of Oregon was the GTFF, because I've heard of your strength, your actions, your commitment. Since I was very young I've been involved in social justice movements and different labor organizations and was very excited about the possibility of being part of our union. As soon as I got to Eugene I started trying to find ways of participating and helping out in our organization, to build a strong union and create solidarity not only among GEs but throughout the community we are part of. For the past few months I have been a steward for the Sociology department, co-chair of the Workers' Caucus and lately I have been acting as a temporary co-chair of the International GEs Caucus. I have

also been a member of the Organizing Committee and was a delegate to the AFT-Higher Education Conference and the AFT-Oregon Convention. As a VP of Political Education I intend to help create a space where GEs can discuss and find ways of engaging in different political actions and debates. I want to move our political discussion beyond the limits of electoral politics and think about different issues such as the fight for the raise of the minimum wage, working rights for adjunct professors, labor rights for farm and immigrant workers, social movement unionism, fight against austerity/neoliberal policies, rank and file organizing. I intend to work very closely with the VP of External Relations to build bridges with other organizations and find ways of empowering our members for a strong, democratic and egalitarian union.