



# Grinnell College

## Office of Human Resources

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March 27, 2025

VIA EMAIL ([ugsdw.org@gmail.com](mailto:ugsdw.org@gmail.com))  
UGSDW Leadership

RE: Compensation for Early-Arrival, Late-Departure, and Reunion Student Workers

Dear UGSDW Leadership:

We write following the Union Management Committee's (the "UMC's") March 17, 2025 discussion regarding compensation for early-arrival, late-departure, and Reunion student workers. Thank you for bringing your concerns to the College's attention—we appreciate the fruitful discussion. As you know, we strongly desire to maintain a productive relationship with the UGSDW and to abide by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (the "Agreement") the UGSDW and the College entered in April 2024.

Following our discussion, the College again reviewed Article 6 of the Agreement. The language of Section 6.1 unambiguously states: "A single base pay level shall be assigned to all Student Worker positions on campus, subject to the exception of Section 6.2." Section 6.1 sets the pay level for student workers as \$13.50 for the 2024-2025 academic year. Section 6.2 sets compensation for Community Advisors as: "(a) a College-designated room grant at the basic room level or (b) a stipend of equivalent value." During collective bargaining, the parties bargained extensively over rate of pay. The UGSDW repeatedly and consistently bargained for implementation of a single wage for all student workers, excepting Community Advisors, and took the position that it was inequitable for student workers to be compensated differently for different positions.<sup>1</sup> The College met that interest by shifting to a uniform rate of pay as enshrined in the

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<sup>1</sup> *Collective Bargaining – March 16, 2023*, Grinnell College at 1:18:40-1:19:32 (last accessed Mar. 21, 2025), <https://grinnell.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=6eb88f74-61b7-4b9a-8b66-afc800c21a63> ("I think we remain interested in not having pay differential, a pay

agreement.<sup>2</sup> The College believes that providing room and/or board as additional compensation for Student Workers who arrive before the opening of the academic year, depart after its closing, or work during the summer would violate the unambiguous language of Section 6.1, which was bargained for by the parties, and undermine the authority of the Agreement.

Unfortunately, student workers in several positions were recently offered, either verbally or in writing, room and board as additional compensation for work done outside the academic year. This appears to be a result of the operational difficulties of shifting from a pay scale to a uniform wage. Specifically, offers for room and board were communicated to student workers in Reunion, Grinnell Science Project Leader, Community Advisor, New Student Orientation, and Pre-Orientation (PCPOP, IPOPOP) positions (the “Affected Student Workers”). Upon learning this, and in an effort to preemptively avoid a violation of the Agreement, the College sent corrective communications to the Affected Student Workers, informing them that room and board would not be provided per Article 6 of the Agreement.

Per the UGSDW’s representations at the UMC meeting, the College understands that the UGSDW desires for the College to reinstate the room and board compensation offered to the Affected Student Workers. Furthermore, the UGSDW has indicated that, if the College reinstates these offers, the UGSDW will not pursue an unfair labor practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board alleging violation of the Agreement. Given that the College shares the Union’s concerns that revoking these offers created logistical and financial issues for the Affected Student Workers, and in light of the UGSDW’s assurances that it will not take legal action alleging violation of the Agreement, the College intends to reinstate all offers for 1) summer 2025 room and board for Student Workers in Reunion positions, 2) fall 2025 early-arrival room and board for student workers in Grinnell Science Project Leader, New Student Orientation and Pre-Orientation positions, and 3) spring 2025/2026 late-departure and fall 2025 early-arrival room and board for Community Advisor positions.

These reinstatements do not serve to establish a precedent or practice but rather are an effort to correct a mistake on the College’s part. Going forward, the College does not intend to offer early-

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differential between student workers. . . . And we are going to be interested in talking about a set base wage across campus.”).

<sup>2</sup> *Collective Bargaining – March 24, 2023 Part 2*, Grinnell College at 51:30-51:43 (last accessed Mar. 21, 2025), <https://grinnell.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=fbf424f0-16b9-408e-87ef-afcf012c11b5> (“So you all expressed an interest to us of having a single wage a universal—I’ll call it a universal wage—for your membership so we have moved away from . . . a tiered wage system to meet you.”); *id.* at 52:56-54:26 (“The College does not think that it is fair that all employees be paid the same because there are distinct differences in the nature of various positions. And it’s going to be an operational problem for the College to do this. But we heard you when you said from your philosophical standpoint, you wanted the same wage. So we’ve moved to that, and that’s a substantial role. . . . So I just wanted to point that out, that the College has made a substantial movement and that we’ve done so basically in spite of the problems that we see.”).

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arrival, late-departure, or summer room or board to student workers in any positions per the unambiguous language of Article 6.

We intend to issue communications to the Affected Student Workers shortly to minimize the effects caused by the revocation of the room and board offers. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to us. We apologize for any confusion caused by the room or board offers and appreciate your efforts to resolve the issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jana Grimes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long, sweeping underline.

Jana Grimes  
Vice President of Human Resources