

# 2024 Year In Review

United Campus Workers of Arizona  
CWA Local 7065



## Our Wins

When we fight, we win! We have made lots of progress through official and unofficial channels this year to materially improve the working and learning conditions of many of our members. You can read more about our wins at [UCWArizona.org](https://ucwaz.org).

- Menstrual Equity Win: As of Summer 2024, all first floor campus bathrooms (excluding the student union and gyms) at the University of Arizona will feature menstrual products (sustainable pads and tampons) and product dispensers. Thank you to our allies in the GPSC.
- Fee Waiver Win: UCWAZ and partners in the University of Arizona's Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC) pulled off a historic financial win for graduate students at UA. Student fees have now been bundled with tuition, so anyone receiving tuition remission will have this applied to their fees. Several thousand TAs, RAs, and GAs no longer have to pay hundreds and thousands of dollars of fees.
- UA President Robbins Stepped Down: In response to the University of Arizona's financial crisis, our union formed our Chop from the Top Campaign. As part of the campaign, our members successfully pressured Robbins to cut his salary and demanded more transparency from administrators during the financial crisis. Eventually, our union's call for Robbins' resignation resulted in his decision to step down.
- \$25 by '25 Win at ASU: Graduate student RA/TAs at ASU got a significant raise for this Spring and will be making \$26,544 as a new base stipend for the academic year. While many RA/TAs lose their employment over the summer, they continue to work for the university doing their own research. Considering that many grad students depend on their stipend as their entire annual income, this is the first time that our stipend averages out to \$25.50/hr for 20 hours a week for the entire year! We continue to fight for a higher wage as many grad students are expected to work far beyond the weekly cap of 20 hours a week.
- Contingent Faculty Campaign Successes at ASU: In 2023, United Campus Workers of Arizona launched our [Contingent Faculty petition](#), calling for improvements in working conditions for non-tenure eligible faculty. Our hard work has yielded material results! At ASU we have secured the pathway to be promoted to ranks for instructors and achieved an increased minimum wage of \$60k for all contingent faculty.



- Membership Growth: Our membership has grown by over 20% in 2024, which means worker power on each campus is growing too. Help us build the momentum by reaching out to your own co-workers and asking them to join.



### **UUNA/NAU Merger**

In February 2024, workers in NAU's previous labor union, the University Union of Northern Arizona (UUNA) voted to join with United Campus Workers of Arizona. We are proud to now represent all workers at all three state universities, including Northern Arizona University. We want to thank the leadership of UUNA for their hard work in making this a smooth transition and look forward to seeing NAU take off as one of our fastest growing caucuses.

### **UCWAZ at ABOR**

The Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) are governor-appointed public officials that hold concentrated power over Arizona's three state universities that affect **every student, staff, faculty member, and community member**. We showed up to every single ABOR meeting this year to remind them of our demands and to make our voices heard during the public comments section. These board meetings provide the space for a cross-sector organizing moment to demonstrate solidarity across our connected struggles and show how powerful we are together. We presented our demands at ABOR FIVE TIMES this year!

### **UCWAZ in the News**

As a labor union representing public sector workers in a state that doesn't recognize collective bargaining, we have to work through both official and unofficial channels to achieve material change. One of the best ways we can work through unofficial channels is to get LOUD. While we work to build majorities at Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona, we pursue many strategies to make our voices heard. One of the ways we continue to fight to improve higher education working conditions is by drawing as much attention to workplace issues as possible whenever possible. This year, we were featured in a New York Times article, an Arizona State Press article, and other news sources across Arizona.

- [New York Times](#)
- [Arizona State Press](#)
- [KGUN9](#)

You can read more news stories about our union, press releases, and our official statements on our website at [UCWArizona.org/press](https://UCWArizona.org/press).





## Organizing Drive

United Campus Workers (UCW) is a collection of union locals represented nationally by the Communication Workers of America (CWA). We exist in many states across the country, including Colorado, Florida, Tennessee, and Utah, to name a few.

This year, we were joined by staff organizers from UCW Tennessee, UCW Utah, and UCW Colorado to kick off our Organizing Drive. Over the course of two weeks, we traveled to all three Arizona universities to spread the word about our labor union and to recruit new members. In just one month, we were able to grow our membership by 6%.

Thank you to our dedicated member volunteers and to our UCW staff organizer siblings who helped to make this year's Organizing Drive so successful.

## Legal Defense Committee

This year, we established our Legal Defense Committee. The Committee is made up of a group of members to whom concerned workers can report potential legal workplace concerns. The committee performs preliminary research and ultimately interfaces with a local, labor-focused law firm to determine if there is a case for the member in question. Compensation for the law firm's work comes out of our local's Legal Defense Fund. This is a budget line item approved by the membership every six months for amounts up to \$2,000. The committee has completed over 20 intakes from staff, students, and faculty at UA, ASU, and NAU. We have successfully helped members secure reasonable accommodations, short term disability leave, relief from disciplinary proceedings, and safety from chronic wage theft. You can read more about our Legal Defense Fund on our website at [UCWArizona.org/Legal-Defense-Fund](https://UCWArizona.org/Legal-Defense-Fund).

This Committee, with help from the legal firm who triages our member concerns, Lubin & Enoch, P.C., helped us put on a free, public Know Your Rights training. These trainings inform higher-education public sector workers on their rights in Arizona.

## We're Growing

- Arianne Rodriguez, Staff Organizer: Arianne Rodríguez (she/her) is from El Paso, Texas, and was recently an organizer for National Nurses United. She traveled all across the United States helping nurses form unions in their facilities and help unionized nurses enforce strong contracts. She also worked on the 2020 Bernie Sanders Presidential election in New Hampshire as a Regional Field Director helping train Field Organizers and Volunteers in Stafford County (where they won by seven points). She got her start organizing public school Teachers and Support Personnel. Arianne pledges to always fight for better working conditions





and respect in the workplace. You can reach Arianne by phone at (520) 222-9403 or via email at [arianne@ucwaz.org](mailto:arianne@ucwaz.org).

- **Hannah McKinney, Media & Communications:** Hannah McKinney (she/they) recently moved to Arizona from Durham, North Carolina. In Durham, they managed Communications & Storytelling efforts for Youth Mentoring Collaborative, a capacity-building nonprofit. You can reach Hannah by phone at (520) 222-9905 or via email at [communications@ucwaz.org](mailto:communications@ucwaz.org).
- **Nick Eustrom, Staff Organizer:** Nick Eustrom (he/him) is the newest organizer on the UCWAZ team and is thrilled to have moved to the "The Valley of the Sun". He is originally from Southern California and most recently lived in the PNW, where he worked at SEIU 503 in Oregon as an OIT and Membership Department Auditor. In his free time, he volunteered as a PCP and Neighborhood Leader for the Marion County Dems, where he helped get out the vote for Local, State, and National races. He has experience organizing at the University of Oregon, Oregon State, and Western Oregon University, and he has worked in schools in the past as a security guard and coach. You can reach Nick by phone at (602) 551-8090 or via email at [nick@ucwaz.org](mailto:nick@ucwaz.org).
- **Muna Hijazi, Organizing Coordinator:** Muna Dawn Hijazi (she/her) has been a union and community organizer for over 20 years, with a career full of real wins for working families. Born in Alabama and raised in Virginia outside of Washington DC, she was recruited into the labor movement in 2006 to work and train under the legendary Jane McAlevey in Las Vegas, Nevada, organizing nurses and county employees. Muna returned home to Virginia to help organize and charter Virginia's first statewide homecare union, building it to become a political powerhouse well-established today. Shortly thereafter, she was recruited to lead organizing efforts with adjuncts and graduate students across the nation through SEIU's Faculty Forward campaign. After several years on the road winning union elections in landslides and negotiating strong first contracts, Muna settled in Phoenix, Arizona in 2017. There she worked for the Arizona Educators Association during their historic Red For Ed year of walkouts, ballot initiatives and membership growth. In 2020, she moved to Tucson, where she is based today. When not organizing with her community, Muna adores cooking and music, and is always looking for new recipes and new tunes.

As our membership grows, so does our union staff. This year, we hired two new staff organizers and a media and communications organizer.





## Our New Logo

We celebrated our fourth birthday and addition of NAU this year with a logo makeover. Union members and staff organizers worked together over the summer to:

- Review our past logo to decide what we did and didn't want to carry into the future logo
- Had multiple high-engagement votes on logo designs submitted by members and staff
- Worked with a pro-labor graphic designer Ghost Bongo to clean up our drafts to make a crisp final logo

Thank you to our dedicated members and staff organizers for your hard work in transitioning our old logo to a new, representative logo.

## So, What's Next?

As a member-led organization, our goals are defined by our members. We want to secure fair wages, better benefits, and job security for all higher education workers in Arizona. As our union continues to grow, we are gearing up for our first Lobby Day at the State legislature to affect change in the most official capacity we can: by changing the law.

We encourage our members to join us for our [Higher Education Legislative Advocacy \(HELA\) Day 2025](#) on March 2nd and 3rd, 2025, where we will partner with the Arizona Student Association (ASA) and Higher Education Labor United (HELU) to visit the Arizona State Capitol and meet with legislators to refocus the legislative eye on funding public higher education.



## Stay Connected!

There are so many ways to stay up to date with our ongoing activities! You can check out our website, follow us on social media, and find our updated campaigns and petitions on Action Network. Want to talk to a staff organizer? Reach out to [info@ucwaz.org](mailto:info@ucwaz.org) and we'll get you connected.



You can find us on all platforms @UCWArizona

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [X](#) (formerly Twitter)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Youtube](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Linktree](#)

Remember, WE are the union and together, we are stronger. [Join us to build worker power in your workplace.](#)

