

Graduate Employees' Organization at UIUC

GEO Local 6300 IFT/AFT AFL-CIO at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Graduate Employees' Organization (GEO) at UIUC Statement in Support of Tariq Khan

January 23, 2017

Tariq Khan, Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) member, anti-racist organizer, and PhD candidate in History, is the current target of a harassment campaign by the alt-right, specifically members of TPUSA (Turning Point USA), in Champaign-Urbana. Following the events three weeks ago that involved a TPUSA member making threats against Khan's three young children, Tariq Khan and his family have received several more threats, including death threats, from white supremacists and neo-nazis. Local TPUSA members have also filed disciplinary charges against Khan through the Office of Student Conflict Resolution at UIUC.

We, the GEO, condemn TPUSA's online and workplace campaign of threats, harassment, and intimidation against Tariq Khan. We understand that TPUSA, funded by wealthy far-right donors, is an alt-right affiliated organization which has ties to media outlets such as Breitbart, and runs the "Professor Watchlist" which harasses "leftist" and "anti-American" voices on campuses nationwide. Many of the reports manufactured by TPUSA are based on misleading and false information. According to its founder Charlier Kirk, TPUSA aims to tilt student government elections by giving TPUSA-backed student government candidates campaign funding that is often far in excess of what is normal or even allowable for campus elections. At UIUC, TPUSA has also stalked and filmed other student activists on campus. The harassment of Tariq Khan has to be seen in this larger context and the allegations of TPUSA members need to be tempered with existing information about

TPUSA's detrimental presence on campuses.,,, The operations of TPUSA within UIUC campus—from recruiting youth in their “soft white power” movement to orchestrating harassment campaigns against dissenting voices—poses a critical obstacle for ensuring a campus that says a clear “No” to racism and white supremacy.

We call upon the university to not take any disciplinary action against Tariq Khan because to do so would make the university explicitly supportive of the far right forces on campus.

The Graduate Employees' Organization
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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