



the graduate worker union
of uw–madison since 1969

Press Release: The Teaching Assistants' Association endorses Nicki Vander Meulen in the race for Wisconsin Assembly District 76

July 28, 2020

Madison, WI — The Teaching Assistants' Association (TAA) has endorsed Nicki Vander Meulen in the race for Wisconsin Assembly District 76. While a few candidates in this race align with the TAA's political platform, the TAA—as the labor union for graduate workers at UW–Madison—recognizes Nicki's strong advocacy for public education and her vision for progressive change in the Wisconsin State Legislature.

Nicki has comprehensive and concrete platforms on racial justice, labor rights, disability justice and public health, public education, and mass incarceration. Importantly, she understands how these issues are interconnected and approaches them as such. Nicki has also been deeply involved with community organizations and coalitional work. Since her election to the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) Board of Education, Nicki has been [fighting for police-free schools](#) and for allocating more funding to marginalized communities, including students of color and disabled students. In 2018, Nicki was [one of only two members of the MMSD Board to vote against the contract](#) between the district and the Madison Police Department. Nicki has recently [supported the teachers and staff of MMSD](#) when they faced unilateral changes to their working policies, challenging MMSD administrators to negotiate in good faith with union representatives. Nicki started her own legal practice for juvenile defense and mental health cases, advocating for children and adults with unique needs—we trust Nicki to not only continue her advocacy for marginalized people, but to also build strong coalitions to push for progressive policies in Wisconsin.

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TAA is the oldest graduate student labor union in the United States and advocates for a university that is fair to all—including students, workers, and our families. Graduate student workers perform nearly half of all instruction at UW–Madison, while also taking classes and conducting research. The university works because we do.

To learn more about TAA campaigns, please check our website (<http://taa-madison.org/>) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/taa.madison/>).

For more information, please contact TAA co-presidents Alejandra Canales (alejandra@taa-madison.org) and CV Vitolo-Haddad (cv@taa-madison.org). Questions about supporting electoral and issue campaigns can be directed to the TAA Political Education Committee (pec@taa-madison.org).