



--For Immediate Release--

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MAY 3, UC BERKELEY STUDENT-WORKERS RALLY TO DEMAND RENT FREEZE & EXPANDED AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN FACE OF ESCALATING COSTS AT UC-OWNED FACILITIES

BERKELEY, CA—As one of California’s largest landlords, the University of California has the power to make a difference in the statewide crisis in affordable housing. This fact animates the demands that students and their families will advance on Thursday, May 3rd, at a Housing Justice Rally taking place at noon on Sproul Plaza at UC Berkeley. While the UC Berkeley administration has committed to expand the amount of student housing it offers in response to housing shortages, no commitments have been made for its affordability, and existing University-run housing is facing a rent hike.

Speakers at the rally will include family housing residents, student workers at UC, and Gayle McLaughlin, candidate for Lieutenant Governor of California and former two-term Mayor of Richmond, CA.

Organized by the UC Student-Workers Union (UAW 2865), the Village Residents Association at University Village in Albany, CA, and UC Village: Residents Resisting Discrimination in Family Housing, the Rally and subsequent march will call upon the University to freeze rent at University housing complexes. The University has recently announced a 3.5-4% rent increase at University Village, as well as new parking fees that will add several hundred dollars to some families’ monthly rent. At other complexes, such as the graduate student housing facility Ida Jackson House, a proposed rent hike of 6% came after a rent increase of 4% last year.

Said one Village resident, Erin Smith, “if you are going to increase the rent by 4% you also need to increase pay, which for graduate students is not happening.” Esther Ramer, another Village resident said, “after graduate instructor wages and student-parent grants I still cannot meet my basic living expenses of housing and childcare.”

“My rent is comparable to what I would be getting outside, [in non-university housing] which I feel like is preposterous,” said another student who wishes to remain anonymous out of concern about retaliation. “My rent has gone up \$150 in the three years since I’ve been there.”

The demands that will be presented at this rally match [demands](#) advanced by the UC Student-Workers Union in its #UCForAll Contract Bargaining campaign. In its bargaining goals, the Union representing more than 17,000 undergraduate and graduate student-workers at the systemwide University of California has called upon the UC to create new housing for student-workers that is both affordable and will not result in displacement. While plans are underway to expand the amount of campus housing on UC campuses, current plans indicate that the units will be offered at “market rate,” failing to acknowledge the struggle of workers and their families to meet their cost-of-living expenses. The Union is also concerned that the current plans do not strive to mitigate the University’s impact on the inflation of living expenses in unjustly costly housing markets.

UC Student-Workers Union, UAW Local 2865



Union member and Ph.D. student Eric Peterson said, “Maintaining the affordability of current student-worker housing and ensuring all future development is affordable is essential to ensuring a diverse student body and a UC for all.”

UC student leaders and workers are available for interviews in advance of the bargaining session, as well as after the bargaining session.

WHAT: HOUSING JUSTICE RALLY
WHEN: THURSDAY, MAY 3, 2018
12 PM
WHO: UC UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE WORKERS & FAMILIES
WHERE: SPROUL PLAZA, UC BERKELEY CAMPUS

* The full list of the UC Student-Workers Union goals for bargaining is available at:
<http://www.uaw2865.org/wp-content/uploads/UAW-2865-Final-2018-Bargaining-Goals-for-Ratification.pdf>
This and previous press releases are available at: <http://www.uaw2865.org/current-campaigns/for-the-press-2/>

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