

# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

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July 19, 2008

President Mark Yudof  
University of California  
1111 Franklin Street  
Oakland, Ca. 94607-5200

Dear President Yudof,

We, as faculty and members of the University of California community, stand together with our co-workers at the University of California, the service workers and members of AFSCME local 3299 currently on strike. We are writing to express our commitment to a fair, humane and decent university climate in which all workers receive a living wage and benefits which will ensure physical and mental health for themselves and their families. The labor of our co-workers in these positions is no less crucial to the institutional integrity of the university than our own. The university must work for everyone.

Yet 8,500 university workers are part of the working poor. The women and men who prepare and serve food, clean buildings, tend gardens, drive vans, care for patients and perform other vital services are not making family-sustaining wages. They earn dramatically less than workers employed at the California community colleges and other hospitals, which pay on average 25% more. Many workers and their families earn wages so low that they are income eligible for nine federal and state programs designed to help the poor.

Yet at the other edge of the campus economic spectrum, the university has raised salaries to administrators to be competitive with corporate CEO's (with a proposed 33% raise in top level administrative salaries over the next three years.) President Yudof, your salary of \$885,000 is almost twice that of former President Dynes. This glaring discrepancy between soaring salaries for some and poverty wages for others is part of the national disgrace of increasing inequality, the death of a 'middle class', and the increasing impoverishment of millions.

It costs roughly \$24 an hour to make ends meet in California, according to an October 2007 report by the California Budget Project, a non partisan think tank. Yet after nearly a year of bargaining, the University offer has not come close to improving poverty wages that are as low as \$10 per hour. AFSCME has finally called a strike in response to the refusal of the University to lift 8500 of its own workers out of poverty. The university has responded with threats of disciplinary action and dismissal for those asking for a living wage for themselves, their co-workers and their families.

We urge the university to bargain in good faith with AFSCME and the workers it represents, offer workers a living wage, and stop threats and intimidation. The University of California has the choice to take the lead in just treatment of all workers. The UC is a world-leader in higher education, but it is also an institution dedicated to serving the public, whose who reside in our state. We urge you to make the University of California a leader in justice as well - for all who make the university run and not just those at the top.

We as faculty and other members of the community of the University of California support AFSCME's demands to create an equitable and just university and stand with our fellow workers for:

- Longevity Steps at Market Rate
- A UC minimum wage that abolishes poverty wages
- Guaranteed employee costs and coverage of benefits
- Overtime pay improvements
- Ceilings on parking fee increases
- Protections for good, represented, career jobs at UC
- Freedom from threats and intimidation

Sincerely,

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Prof. Ellen Reese, UCR, Department of Sociology and Chair of Labor Studies

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Prof. Maurya Simon, UCR, Department of Creative Writing

Prof. Erika Suderburg, UCR, Department of Art, Dance, Media and Cultural Studies

Prof. Robert Nash Parker, UCR, Department of Sociology; Co-Director of Presley Center for Crime and Justice Studies

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Prof. Rachel Morello-Frosch, UCB, Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management and School of Public Health

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