



# UAW Local 4121

---

2633 Eastlake Ave E, Suite 200 • Seattle, WA 98102 • 206.633.6080

May 25, 2016

John Vinson, Chief of Police  
University of Washington  
1117 NE Boat St.  
Seattle, WA 98105

Dear Chief Vinson:

In light of the assault that occurred on May 4th in the K and J wings of the Health Sciences Building, we have been reevaluating the safety and security of everyone that works in this building. This incident has made many people working in Health Sciences feel unsafe in their work environment. We, as leaders in UAW Local 4121 and representatives of student workers in the Health Sciences, are therefore requesting that your department enact several immediate measures (listed below) to ensure safety in the future and to improve the lines of communication.

Many of us working in Health Sciences were alarmed upon learning of this incident, but our knowledge of the incident came from scattered sources. This led to the circulation of misinformation and rumors about what had occurred. Some of us only learned the details of the event from a Seattle Times article. We are distressed by this general lack of communication about the incident, as well as the lack of responsiveness some individuals have experienced with the University of Washington Police Department. Several individuals that emailed UWPD did not receive a response to their requests for information, and one administrator did not receive an immediate response to a request for a safety briefing for his department. To our knowledge the Department of Biochemistry is the only department to have been provided the aid of UWPD in the aftermath of this incident, at an information session where UWPD outlined their rapid response to a gathering of Biochemistry students and faculty. We feel that the decision to leave out other departments was a gross oversight. The K and J wings house labs from several different departments, and the floor on which the incident occurred houses the Microbiology Department's administrative offices.

We believe that better communication between students, faculty, administrators and UWPD will lead to superior safety measures in the Health Sciences Building. We therefore demand that UWPD and/or UW Safe Campus hold **at least three additional safety briefings and discussions**, akin to the one held in the Department of Biochemistry, to be held no later than June 10, 2016. We will help advertise these to our members and colleagues throughout the Health Sciences Building. We'd like to request that the following topics be covered in these discussions:

- The possibility of implementing additional safety measures such as locked access to lab floors, requiring staff to wear badges, placement and publicity of emergency phones, or additional security staff.
- The criteria used to place incidents on UW Alerts or Notification of Criminal Incidents.
- Strategies for better disseminating information about health/safety across multiple departments.
- Any other advice on how to improve safety, including forums for workers' opinions to be heard.

Workers in Health Sciences have strong opinions on safety that need to be heard, and we look forward to working with you and drawing on your expertise as we proceed through this difficult time. Please contact us at [uaw4121@uaw4121.org](mailto:uaw4121@uaw4121.org) with your response.

Thank you,

Theresa Aliwarga	Department of Medicinal Chemistry
Una Natterman	Department of Biochemistry
Kerri Thomas	Department of Immunology
Chelsea Pagan	Department of Pathology, Seattle Children's Research Institute
Daniel Holmes	Department of Microbiology
Erica Hildebrand	Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center
Hannah Frizzell	Department of Bioengineering
David Peeler	Department of Bioengineering
Zach Wescoe	Department of Bioengineering
Erica Sanchez	Department of Microbiology
Michelle Giarmarco	Department of Biochemistry
Hannah Ledvina	Department of Microbiology
Anthony Costanza	Department of Pathology, Seattle Children's Research Institute
Max Turner	Department of Physiology and Biophysics, Neuroscience Program
Lily Berger	Department of Material Science
Taylor Stepien	Department of Global Health