

April 22, 2015
For Immediate Release

Contact: Liz Mills (646.271.0138)



UAW 4121 Members Overwhelmingly Vote to Authorize Strike if Circumstances Justify

With historically large turnout, a majority of all 4,000 Academic Student Employees (ASEs) at the University of Washington have voted to authorize the union's bargaining committee to call a strike if circumstances justify. Out of 2,258 total votes cast, 90% voted YES to authorizing.

"The vote clearly shows that we want the University to meet our demands and reach a fair contract now," says Liz Mills, Bargaining Committee member from the Information School. "Our members were not intimidated by the University's attempts to discourage them from voting, and want them to get serious about reaching a contract that addresses our key demands."

Midway through the vote the University had issued a letter to all ASEs, asserting that striking was illegal and that ASEs could face adverse action if they were to go on strike. In response a delegation of ASEs delivered a letter to one of the University Deans who had authored the letter (<http://www.uaw4121.org/uws-misinformation-campaign-to-intimidate-workers/>), giving it an "F" grade for its misinformation and threats. UAW members communicated the message that UW needs to stop wasting resources on threats and focus instead on reaching a deal. The Union also posted a tumblr online (uaw4121letterresponses.tumblr.com) for members to post their responses of shock and outrage to the University's attempts to intimidate them.

"The message from our members is clear: the cost of living in Seattle is rising sharply, and we cannot afford additional fees or loss of benefits in the salaries we make today," says Robin Gold, Bargaining Committee member from the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. "And we are prepared to act together and do what it takes to secure a contract that ASEs can afford to live on."