

We, the recently elected members of the executive board and bargaining committee of UAW Local 4121, commit to reinforcing and perpetuating an anti-racist framework in every aspect of the work we do to improve the living and working conditions of Academic Student Employees and others both within and outside of the UW community.

Our Local Union has a proud tradition of fighting for social justice at the bargaining table, in contract enforcement, and during grievance handling. This history includes winning stronger wages and benefits and fighting wage theft, bargaining groundbreaking non-discrimination and harassment protections (including first-ever protections against microaggressions), resisting the discriminatory international student fee, taking concrete steps to eliminate transphobia, improving access to leave and childcare, financially supporting and taking action in solidarity with #blacklivesmatter, fighting against xenophobia and for comprehensive immigration reform, fighting for climate justice, and more. We will continue this work, and we *are committed to fighting all forms of systematic and institutional oppression through our capacity as a labor union and beyond.*

We believe that our power to win these fights is fundamentally a function of our strong majority involvement and organization. We take very seriously the concerns of any member who has been impacted by structural or institutional oppression whether on the basis of their identities or because they call into question our leadership's stated priorities. A union leader was recently called to account for comments made at the April 25th union meeting. We believe that the intentions behind these comments do not matter, and that their impact is what is at issue. At the same time, we strongly believe that our union should be a space that allows us to locate opportunities for correction and education, rather than a space that alienates members whose comments reflect and indicate problems that need to be addressed within our local. This only makes members afraid to express themselves, which limits future opportunities for education, and in turn reproduces systemic and institutional racism and other intersectional oppressions. In order to develop strong, systemic anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-transphobic changes in our union, university, and community, we should not alienate members who make comments that reveal institutional oppression; instead we must view these comments as opportunities for education and transformative action.

Since our union is in no way immune from systemic oppression, we are committed to continuing to educate ourselves and the membership on the intersection of labor issues and other forms of systemic oppression. To that end, we look forward to continued development of trainings and space for discourse to pursue these opportunities and enact anti-racist practices. Development of this space must include not only an analysis of the impact of systemic oppression, but the facility to voice thoughts that might reveal possible impediments to meaningfully addressing this impact; we cannot challenge systemic oppression without understanding its specific manifestations--moment to moment. As a union, together we must be committed to reflexivity and creating spaces wherein which we can acknowledge our mistakes and generate collective solutions.

In the coming months we will work with every interested UAW member in developing anti-oppression workshops that address how we can combat micro aggressions and systemic oppression through our capacity and function as a labor union. These trainings will be part of the steward training, mandatory for elected leadership, and open to every interested member. We will make it a priority to continue to work with our existing union work groups - including divestment, BDS, microaggressions, climate justice, and gender equity - and we will continue to work with campus groups, like Decolonize UW, that are fighting in solidarity with #blacklivesmatter. Together we will do better to win justice and strengthen our standing as a force for progressive social change on campus and beyond.

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