

May 6th, 2024

Ana Mari Cauce, President

University of Washington

Office of the President

301 Gerberding Hall

Box 351230

Seattle, Washington 98195-1230

RE: Settle a Fair Contract with over 6,000 Academic Student Employees

Dear President Cauce,

We write in response to the ongoing contract negotiations between the University of Washington and Academic Student Employees represented by UAW 4121. We are concerned about the potential for disruption to student learning, research, and the University community should an agreement not be reached swiftly, and urge you to settle a fair contract that reflects the prestige of the University of Washington among peer institutions.

Academic Student Employees are a critical workforce at the University of Washington, working as Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, Readers, Tutors, Graders, and Staff Assistants. They do a majority of contact hours with students, ensuring all students receive an excellent education. In addition, they are key to powering the University's research mission and contribute to bringing in over \$1 billion per year in research grants and contracts.

The University of Washington is one of the top public universities and research institutions in the world and received more federal research dollars than any other public institution. However, the UW cannot live up to its mission and reputation if it falls behind peer institutions. In 2022, the University of California system raised wages of Academic Student Employees to \$3777 per month for the academic year 2024-25. Similar increases happened at Washington State University, where Academic Student Employees in Vancouver receive \$3124 per month in 2024-25. The University of Washington should have planned ahead to offer increases that keep up with these standards. For the University of Washington to remain competitive and continue to attract top tier students, it must keep pace with industry standards with living wages and strong benefits as we have seen over the last several years.

As one of the nation's most prestigious universities, the UW has not only the opportunity but also the obligation to be a leader in setting industry standards in academia. We urge the University of Washington to come to the table with UAW 4121 and bargain a contract that reflects industry standards and the University's commitment to being a leader in the sector, and reflect the immense value of Academic Student Employees to the University of Washington.

Sincerely,

Representative Dave Paul, 10th District

Representative Strom Peterson, 21st District

Representative Beth Doglio, 22nd District

Representative Dan Bronoske, 28th District

Representative Sharlett Mena, 29th District

Representative Lauren Davis, 32nd District

Representative Mia Gregerson, 33rd District

Representative Emily Alvarado, 34th District

Representative Joe Fitzgibbon, 34th District

Representative Julia Reed, 36th District

Representative Sharon Tomiko Santos, 37th District

Representative Julio Cortes, 38th District

Representative Mary Fosse, 38th District

Representative Nicole Macri, 43rd District

Representative Darya Farivar, 46th District

Representative Gerry Pollet, 46th District

CC:

Margaret Shepherd, Chief of Staff and Chief Strategy Officer, Office of the President, University of Washington

Mindy Kornberg, Vice President for Human Resources, University of Washington

Banks Evans, Assistant Vice President Labor Relations, University of Washington

Joe Dacca, Director of State Relations, University of Washington

Levin Kim, UAW 4121 President

Alli Carlisle, UAW International Representative, UAW