

Dear UW President Dr. Robert Jones & Board of Regents,

We are contacting you today on behalf of AFSCME Local 2083, Seattle Public Library workers, to express our support of the University of Washington Libraries and Press Employees, represented by SEIU 925, in obtaining a fair contract that they deserve as soon as possible. We stand in solidarity with their demands for better pay, layoff and DEI protections, and equity for Professional Libraries Employees (PLEs).

UWLU members have been working on an expired contract since the beginning of the year, which is unreasonable, unnecessary, and completely unacceptable. The University of Washington's reputation as a world-renowned research institution is made possible in large part by the labor, care, and skill of UWLU members. And as readers, we know that university presses are essential to sharing stories, knowledge, and new discoveries often overlooked by other publishers, especially stories that define our region and its peoples. Without press employees, we would not have access to these stories.

The University's lack of effort towards bargaining a fair contract with UWLU is embarrassing and insulting to the hardworking members who keep this institution running every day. 1% raises are not enough for staff to keep up with inflation and the high cost of living in Seattle/King County. Like many of us, PLEs and librarians often have to move farther from where they work to afford housing, can't make student loan payments, and can't pay for food without assistance programs like food stamps. When the University degrades their workers like this, student and community learning and engagement suffer, too.

AFSCME Local 2083 is ready to amplify and stand in solidarity with UW Librarians and PLEs throughout their struggle to earn the contract they deserve. We demand that UW management live up to their purported values and agree to a fair contract with UWLU, and their demands for better pay, layoff and DEI protections, and equity for Professional Libraries employees (PLEs) without delay.

In solidarity,

AFSCME Local 2083

Seattle Public Library Workers