



UNIVERSITY
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10,000 Research and Technical workers announce March 20th strike at UC

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10,000 University of California (UC) Research and Technical (RX/TX) professionals will be on strike across the state on March 20th. They will be joined by 5,000 UPTE Healthcare (HX) professionals and 27,000 AFSCME Patient Care Technical and Service workers who will strike in solidarity. The latter groups are also without a contract, seeking many of the same terms from UC.

UPTE researchers and technicians do a wide range of work, including running clinical healthcare trials and laboratory tests, managing classroom and hospital technology, monitoring building safety, caring for research animals, running museum and theater productions, and more.

Since bargaining began in May 2017 UPTE met with UC seventeen times, with meetings always open for affected employees to share their concerns with UC negotiators. UPTE members' comments focused on how contracting out, erosion of full-time career work, and challenges to recruitment and retention are undermining the research, healthcare, and educational missions they carry out.

UC negotiators presented RX/TX with a last, best, and final offer on February 13 which included wage increases that were less than half what UC agreed to in September of 2018 with nurses represented by the California Nurses Association. UC negotiators also continued to insist that UPTE accept retirement cuts that it had conceded on in talks with nurses and continued to reject overtime improvements and limitations on the use of part-time positions.

"It's insulting for UC executives to continue to try to force us into accepting these offers," remarked David Carlos, an IT worker at UC San Diego. "It shows a profound lack of commitment to the institution as a whole. Research and technology drive UC's greatness and the short-sighted attempt by UC executives to undermine and outsource career work will be felt by students, patients, and the public at large."

UC has admitted that its rejection of UPTE's proposals was not due to financial hardship. The union continues to point to UC's executive pay, management growth, and privatization plans as evidence that the University Regents put the interests of senior executives above those of the University community and the public.

The union has pointed out that nearly 4 out of 5 RX/TX workers leave UC in less than five years; showing that this was due to uncompetitive pay and lower overtime standards than in the private sector, among other issues UPTE has been bargaining for. UC negotiators have acknowledged the high rate of turnover, arguing that pension cuts are in fact made with this in mind.

"Many Californians may not realize they benefit from the breakthroughs that UC researchers are responsible for," said Kelsey Zorn, a Clinical Research Coordinator at UCSF who studies neurological disease. "But the Regents do know and they are consciously choosing to jeopardize that innovation by failing to invest in world-class staff while UC executives continue to prosper."