



Media advisory

For immediate release 9-24-09

CONTACT: Jelger Kalmijn, president@upte-cwa.org, (619) 370-3753
Carolyn Buckmaster, carolan@upte-cwa.org, (858) 775-7498
Lynn Kessler Ph.D, lynnkess15@gmail.com, (818) 667-0533
Lisa Kermish, lkermish@yahoo.com, (510) 329-9119

UNIVERSITY
PROFESSIONAL
AND TECHNICAL
EMPLOYEES

CWA Local 9119
AFL-CIO

representing
employees at the
University of
California

2510 Channing Way
Suite 11
Berkeley, CA
94704

phone (510) 704-8783
fax (510) 704-8065
info@upte-cwa.org

1015 Gayley Ave.
Suite 115
Los Angeles, CA
90024

phone (310) 443-5484
fax (310) 443-5487
uptela@netwood.net

www.upte.org

Faculty, students, staff coordinate day of action for public education

Thousands of UC faculty, students and staff join UPTe picket lines, shut down campuses

Striking technical and research workers at the University of California systemwide got the support of thousands of faculty and students today, who walked out of classes to join them in a day of action to save public education. The 9,000 technical and research workers, represented by University Professional and Technical Employees (UPTe-CWA local 9119), are holding a one-day unfair labor practice strike to protest how UC president Mark Yudof and the regents have mishandled reductions in state funding.

The historic joint actions began at dawn on most campuses, with spirited picket lines that were widely honored by all sectors of the UC community, as well as outside contractors such as building trades workers and bus drivers. **Coordinated actions continue at noon with rallies at most campuses** (check <http://www.upte.org> for more).

The strike was endorsed by the University of California Students Association, the representative body of UC's 220,000 undergraduates, as well as organizations of faculty and graduate students. The Coalition of University Employees, representing clerical workers at UC, declared its members would refuse to cross UPTe-CWA's picket lines, as did members of several other UC unions.

"The UC system is about to be pushed over the brink by Yudof's mismanagement," said Jelger Kalmijn, UPTe-CWA's systemwide president and a staff research associate at UC San Diego. "Our unfair labor practice strike is aimed at Yudof's illegal, unilateral cuts to the university's core research and educational functions. He is legally obligated to bargain with us, but refuses to discuss his plans in good faith at the bargaining table," said Kalmijn. Yudof has advocated student fee increases, cuts to education, research and essential public services, all the while granting UC's executives generous stipends and perks.

Yudof's actions have provoked widespread outrage among staff, faculty and students. "Our decades of hard work have helped make UC the jewel of California's higher education," said Lisa Kermish, an administrative analyst at UC Berkeley and vice president of UPTe-CWA. "We won't stand by and watch it destroyed. This institution

belongs to the people of California, not to a small group of unaccountable executives who think they can do what they like, ignoring public input and budget transparency.”

Meanwhile, more **UC executives were given higher salaries at the September 15-17 regents’ meeting** after discussion in closed session, the minutes of which were posted late last week. Some received increases of up to 30% or up to \$52,000 per year to salaries in the \$200,000 to \$400,000 range. (For details, please see <http://www.upte.org/moreexecraises.pdf>.)

“For Yudof and the regents to do this yet again is mind-boggling,” said Carolan Buckmaster, UPTE’s San Diego president and a staff researcher. “With one hand, they furlough frontline employees who provide essential services, and with the other, they grant UC’s top officials lavish pay raises. It’s unconscionable.”

In late July, a similar series of executive pay increases was criticized by a wide spectrum of the UC community, as well as legislators and taxpayers. Shortly afterwards, the state Legislature passed Senate Bill 86 prohibiting UC executive pay raises during bad budget years. That bill, which UC officials lobbied heavily against, is currently on the governor’s desk awaiting his signature or veto.

UC officials claim these executives must be compensated for “the assumption of additional duties” as part of their jobs. “Nearly all UC employees are taking on additional duties without extra compensation during this time of cutbacks and layoffs of colleagues,” notes Lynn Kessler, PhD, a UCLA researcher and UPTE activist. “We do it because we are committed to providing quality education and research to the people of California, not to make a personal profit.”

UPTE, an affiliate of the Communications Workers of America, represents over 12,000 employees at the ten UC campuses and Lawrence Berkeley National Lab. The researchers and techs on strike work as lab assistants, computer techs, theater staff, animal care techs, sign language interpreters, museum scientists, and research associates, among other positions.

For more information:

UPTE-CWA strike updates: <http://www.upte.org>

UC faculty walkout: <http://ucfacultywalkout.com>

UC graduate student walkout: <http://www.gradstudentstoppage.com>

UC undergraduate walkout: [http://www.uca.org/board/resolutions/UC Walk Out Resolution Final.pdf](http://www.uca.org/board/resolutions/UC_Walk_Out_Resolution_Final.pdf)