

**TO: The UCSC and Santa Cruz community**  
**FROM: UPTE Local 3 (UCSC)**  
**DATE: February 21, 2025**  
**RE: UPTE and AFSCME strikes**

**Next Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday (February 26, 27, and 28), the University Professional and Technical Employees union (UPTE) will be conducting a strike at all ten UC campuses and five medical centers. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) will be striking on Wednesday and Thursday.**

UPTE represents UC research, technical and healthcare professionals; AFSCME represents UC dining, custodial, transit and grounds workers. Together, our two unions represent 57,000 UC employees. Both unions have been bargaining with UC for more than eight months, and have been without a ratified contract since last October.

At the bargaining table, UC has offered UPTE workers pay increases that do not make up for losses to inflation or address the high cost of living in places like Santa Cruz. They have not responded meaningfully to UPTE's proposals to improve work-life balance and provide clear avenues for career advancement. They have refused to bargain in good faith, withholding, for example, data UPTE has requested about the challenge of recruitment and retention at UC. (The attached side-by-side chart summarizes UPTE and UC positions in bargaining; additional information is at [upte.org/ucstrike](http://upte.org/ucstrike).)

We know that UC can do better. Budget challenges vary by campus, but decisions about systemwide contracts are made at the systemwide level. And we know that systemwide UC has the money to invest in the staff who are central to UC's mission. Indeed, UC has \$28 billion in unrestricted reserves, and:

- Over the past five years, UC has increased the number of managers by 48 percent, while increasing frontline staff only 8 percent.
- UC gave President Drake and many chancellors and top executives raises of 30 percent or more in 2023 and 2024, at a time when most UC staff received annual raises of 4-5 percent. The lowest paid UC chancellor is now paid \$785,000 a year.
- UC has spent more than \$2 billion buying new hospitals and medical facilities over the past two years, and plans to make \$30 billion in additional infrastructure investments over the next five years.

The question is, what it will take to re-set UC's priorities.

**Earlier this month, UPTE members voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike, and we are asking all members to join the picket line and refrain from conducting their regular work next Wednesday through Friday. We are also asking the larger UCSC and Santa Cruz community for your understanding of our strike and the reasons behind it – and for your support.** Our actions are not intended to punish UCSC students or others for UC's intransigence

in bargaining, but to send a clear message of our determination to compel UC to bargain in good faith and to win a strong contract for the workers – at every level of the institution – who make UC what it is. You can provide your support in a number of ways:

- 1) Support the picket line in whatever ways you feel are appropriate, and support others in your workplace who choose to do so. Please join us at the picket line at the Main Entrance of campus anytime after 7:00 am each day. If you can only be there a short time, come to the daily rallies at 12:30, starting with our kick-off rally on Wednesday, February 26.**
- 2) Call Chancellor Larive (831-459-4291) and President Drake (510-987-9200), and urge them to settle all outstanding contracts with UC unions. Communicate your support for our efforts to other campus and UC leaders through whatever other means are appropriate given your position.**
- 3) Talk with others on campus and in the community – faculty, students, administrators, friends and neighbors – about why we are doing this, and ask them to join you in supporting UC unions by taking the steps above.**