

MEDIA ADVISORY FOR: THURSDAY, August 8 at 4:30pm

Contact: Jesús Canchola Sánchez, jsanchez@seiu73.org, 312-588-7534

UIUC Workers Rally & Give Notice of Intent to Strike on Freshman Move-In Day

What: Food service and building service workers at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, represented by SEIU Local 73, will hand deliver a notice to the UIUC President's Office that workers plan to strike when incoming freshman move in to residence halls if nothing changes at the bargaining table.

These workers who cook, clean, move furniture, strip & wax floors, are a vital link to the success of students and all of the University community. The last strike lasted for three days in March, 2013. A major bone of contention for years has been the University's chronic refusal to hire enough service employees, particularly in building service. Understaffing is severe and dangerous. Many workers are currently covering 2-3 vacant jobs, resulting in increased muscle strain and injury, as well as stress, the threat of discipline, and dissatisfaction with the quality of the work when there are not enough workers to do it properly. Many are injured on the job and the University often resists paying workers compensation.

Food service workers are laid off four times a year: a week at Thanksgiving, a week during spring break, a month over the winter break, and three months in the summer. During this time laid-off employees are not eligible for unemployment and must continue paying for health insurance. Many are on public assistance. Small amounts of work are available, but the work is not steady and often insufficient to cover bills. Many workers lose their phones, cars, or living arrangements in the Summer. This is unfair to workers and the community they serve.

The next bargaining session is scheduled for Friday, August 9. Workers plan on holding a vote on what the University offers on the same day. If workers reject the offer, the strike will begin at midnight on August 22. Classes begin on August 26. Food service and building service workers are joining their voices to call for fair treatment, dignity, and respect.

When: Thursday, August 8, at 4:30 pm

Where: UIUC Main Quad, 607 S. Matthews Ave., Urbana, IL 61801

Who: SEIU Local 73 members (UIUC food service and building service workers)

###

SEIU Local 73 represents more than 29,000 workers, primarily in public service and publicly funded positions in school districts, municipalities, social service agencies, and many other job classifications in Illinois and Indiana. We are dedicated to improving the lives of workers and their families.