



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **UIUC Management Request Bargaining and Offer Nothing**

**Champaign, IL** – University of Illinois—Urbana Champaign (UIUC) requested today’s bargaining session but showed up with no new offer. The SEIU Local 73 Bargaining Team put forth a proposal to which management had no response and chose to end negotiations early. The next bargaining session is scheduled for Monday, September 23, at 2pm.

“We are disappointed that University management have failed to take negotiations seriously while continually posting threats against the workers,” **said Joseph Richert, SEIU Local 73 Secretary-Treasurer.** “From suspending civil service rules to intimidating workers about their access to healthcare, management continues to demonstrate a lack of respect for these essential employees. Our members are fully prepared to strike for as long as it takes to secure a contract that provides a living wage.”

In the past five days, UIUC management has issued notices requiring physician confirmation for any sick time taken, in direct violation of the existing collective bargaining agreement and the Illinois Education Labor Relations Act. They have suspended Civil Service Rules allowing them to assign unqualified employees to do the work of Food Service and Building Service Workers. And management has posted notices threatening workers with loss of wages and healthcare in a clear attempt to dissuade workers from their legal right to strike.

“The chancellors and presidents of the U of I system continually disrespect its workers and the work we do to keep these campuses running,” **said Melody Decker, Chapter 119 President and Building Service Worker.** “The short staffing in our departments is a direct result of their unwillingness to provide us with a living wage. Every time our contracts are up, we have to beg, plead, and fight for them to give us a few more pennies in our paychecks. They truly are deplorable!”

Research by the University of Illinois Project for Middle-Class Renewal reveals that public university employees are paid 21% less than their counterparts at other state agencies. Meanwhile, U of I President Timothy Killeen is among the top-ten highest paid public university presidents with a \$1.3 Million salary for FY2024-2025.

“If we coached football, Chancellor Jones wouldn’t hesitate to give us the raises we’re asking for,” **said Dena Gary, Head Cook and Bargaining Team Member.** “Every day, we keep these buildings clean and safe. We keep the students and staff fed with healthy meals. We are essential to keeping this university running, but apparently, the work we do is not worthy of respect from them.”

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*SEIU Local 73 represents more than 35,000 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.*