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More than 300 Loyola University Chicago Non-Tenure Track Faculty Strike on May Day

Chicago, IL – More than 300 non-tenure-track faculty members in the College of Arts and Sciences at Loyola University Chicago held a one-day strike on May Day in their fight for a fair contract.

May Day is not just a date on the calendar. It is a reminder of why we organize, why we fight, and why we refuse to back down. This day was born more than a century ago from the blood and sacrifice of workers right here in Chicago — workers who stood in the face of power and declared that dignity on the job is not a privilege. It is a right. That legacy did not end with them. It lives in every contract we've ever won. It lives in every grievance we've ever filed. And it is alive and well right here, right now, on the picket lines at Loyola University Chicago.

After more than a year of contract negotiations, University management has refused to continue negotiations this week in order to avert a strike. Their meager offer of 0%-2.5% merit pay pales in comparison to the \$1.3 million Loyola President Reed gets every year.

“Our working conditions are our students’ learning conditions. We are asking Loyola’s administration to invest in us so we can invest in our students. We know that faculty-student relationships are the key to student retention—and therefore the sustainability of Loyola. Shiny new buildings will do nothing for Loyola if the administration won’t support the school’s faculty,” **said Matthew S. Williams, PhD, Department of Sociology and Global Studies Program.**

The faculty have put forward reasonable demands: a quality raise for all, adequate parental leave for part-time faculty, and manageable workloads for full-time faculty. As unionized faculty have consistently emphasized, their working conditions are Loyola’s students’ learning conditions.

“Our colleagues see what Loyola University Chicago is doing to our community: buying buildings, tearing them down, leaving vacant lots around the neighborhood, investing in countless construction projects. And yet, management claims they have "no flexibility" when it comes to providing fair raises to faculty who helped bring in those tuition dollars in the first place. If the University can invest in rental properties, building new buildings, and paying upper administrators six to seven figure salaries, then they can at least invest in providing a decent wage to their professors who teach the majority of classes at this institution,” **said Dallas Krentzel, PhD, Department of Biology.**

For the first year of the contract, union faculty and Loyola administration are \$548,000 apart between the respective proposals, which is less than 8/100th of 1% of Loyola's \$715 million annual operating budget - this is a rounding error for Loyola but will have a meaningful impact on the lives of Loyola's non-tenure track faculty.

For years two and three, the faculty are proposing a minimum pay increase of approximately 2.5% per year depending on years of service. This is not an extreme or unreasonable proposal.

University management shows no interest in supporting adjunct faculty who teach upwards of 1,000 courses per year to Loyola students.

“These are professors, lecturers, and instructors who have dedicated their careers — in many cases, their entire lives — to educating the next generation. They show up every day, they build relationships with their students, they invest in that institution. And what has Loyola given them in return? Poverty wages. Insecurity. A management team that has decided their labor is not worth a fair contract. That is unacceptable. And we will say so loudly, clearly, and without apology,” **said Dian Palmer, President of SEIU Local 73.**

“These educators are not asking for the moon. They are asking for what every worker deserves — respect, stability, and pay that reflects the value of the work they do. When Loyola — a university that wraps itself in the language of justice and service — turns its back on the very people who make that institution run, that is a moral failure. And SEIU Local 73 will not stay silent about it,” **added Palmer.**

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SEIU Local 73 represents more than 37,000 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.