

USC FACULTY UNION

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, faculty have been organizing to form a strong union at the University of Southern California to raise standards for our profession and the students we teach. Together, we have fought tirelessly to win a lasting, powerful voice for faculty and students at our University.

For years, we have watched our University embrace a business model of education that has prioritized profits over real investment in our core educational mission. Skyrocketing tuition has forced our students to take on crushing student debt loads that will burden their families for decades. At the same time, USC has driven down the cost of instruction — relying on a growing army of low paid, non-tenured faculty hired into contingent positions with no job security and sometimes no benefits. All the while, University executives are making millions and driving a dramatic expansion plan.

Despite flowery, aspirational rhetoric in its mission statement, USC has chosen a track that is systematically undercutting quality, affordable education and imposing its will on the surrounding community.

In an effort to combat the aggressive corporatization of higher education at USC, faculty in Dornsife, Roski, and the International Academy filed for union elections in their schools. Our shared goal is simple: to put University resources back where they belong and to fight with one united voice for a real investment in instruction. USC's response was a swift, unequivocal, and unflinching campaign of

threats and misinformation. Repeatedly, they stated that they would explicitly flaunt federal law by refusing to bargain with faculty if they chose to organize.

Throughout our organizing process, faculty, students, and elected officials urged the administration to remain neutral, and to allow us to consider the question of unionization free from University interference.

Even after a landslide unionization victory in Roski, USC has maintained an aggressive anti-union stance — refusing to recognize the Roski union victory and promising to appeal their union vote to the highest court, flooding the National Labor Relations Board with frivolous appeals aimed at silencing our collective voice.

In Dornsife, the University's blatant law breaking during the unionization process led the Federal government to throw out the election results altogether and call for a new vote. Unfortunately, based on our past experience we have come to the clear conclusion that a re-run will be met with another onslaught of illegal tactics aimed at dividing faculty and protecting University profits.

We've had enough. While we have fought to engage in a democratic process for deciding our futures, it's clear that the University views itself as above the law, and will do anything to silence our collective voice.

Earlier today we filed new unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board and requested a delay in re-running the election at Dornsife. This is a direct result of the University's complete disregard for federal laws meant to protect free and fair elections for workers.

Rather than choose a path of partnership and collaboration, USC has decided to adopt the strategies of bad actor companies like Walmart and McDonald's - using

every possible angle, legal and illegal, to keep workers from having a voice at the University.

While we have chosen to delay a new election at Dornsife, we are in no way abandoning our mission to make USC both a responsible employer and corporate citizen. In fact, we are redoubling our efforts. Together with community and student allies, we remain committed to restoring the promise of higher education at the University of Southern California. United, we will fight for lasting, systemic change at our University — for faculty, for students, and for those in the surrounding community.

[Names of eight Dornsife faculty signatories omitted]

"We stand with University of Southern California faculty in their ongoing struggle for fair wages and a collective voice in the decisions affecting their work and their students. We support the efforts of faculty to form a strong union on campus, and their fight to end the corporatization of higher education at USC. Together with faculty, students, and the larger USC community, we are committed to fighting for lasting change at our city's largest private employer."

Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment
United Students Against Sweatshops, Whittier College
Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance
Pilipino Workers Center
Brown Berets Los Angeles
Salvadorian American National Association

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