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**MAY 22, 2024 BY STEM FOR PALESTINE—UAW4811**

# Police Repression of UCLA SJP Encampment Led to the UAW4811 Strike Vote—So Why Isn't 4811 Leadership Calling UCLA Out on Strike?

On April 30, two days before UAW4811's Triennial elections—in which President Rafael Jaime would face a challenger running on a Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS), Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all, and a work-to-rule strike for Palestine platform—UCLA's SJP encampment was violently attacked by Zionist agitators. Jaime was said to have stood alongside beleaguered encampment protestors and demanded answers to UCLA's negligence. Jaime announced the next day to a crowd at UCLA that 4811 would be filing unfair labor practices charges against the UC for failing to protect workers' right to free speech. That same night, LAPD violently swept the encampment. Jaime and his "Union MADE" Caucus (previously OSWP, affiliated with the UAW Administration Caucus) then called for a strike authorization vote, effectively opening the door for the union to strike in support of divestment demands.

Three weeks and an overwhelming "yes" vote later, the re-elected leadership continues to publicize the police brutality that occurred at UCLA, UCSD, and UCI on the official 4811 website and social media, but is yet to call a strike anywhere but UCSC. Meanwhile, they declined to offer a timeline or criteria for assessing strike readiness, and have barred rank-and-file members from attending Executive Board meetings to discuss the strike.

Since October 2023, local union chapters at UCLA, UCD, UCB, UCSC, and UCSB have passed numerous BDS resolutions and resolutions to commit to bargaining over BDS. Yet, Jaime and the leadership refused to disseminate this information to the membership; 4811 and Region 6 even endorsed the California Senate candidacy of Katie Porter, who repeatedly voted to send more money to Israel. Now, diverting attention from their weak

position on Palestine and the perceived unwillingness to strike, the leadership claims that Science, Engineering, Technology and Math (STEM) workers in 4811, which make up the majority of the current workforce during the summer break, are ambivalent about the strike.

This is false. Not only is the strike action widely and vocally supported in our locals, as evidenced by the strike authorization vote, many STEM workers have joined hand-in-hand with students defending the encampments, protested the US-funded genocide, and were themselves violently attacked by the police. Consider that the call to solidarity with Palestine reflects US public opinion, of which 52 percent of registered voters support an end to US military aid to Israel and 77 percent of Democrats are pro-ceasefire. By deriding our professions, workplaces, and ourselves as regressive, the 4811 leadership is using a trite stereotype as a wedge to divide us from our fellow workers and union siblings. Instead, they should be leveraging the power of STEM workers in the strike.

The urgency to end the US-funded genocide notwithstanding, the future of the labor movement will depend on a clear STEM organizing strategy. The US economy is becoming more and more intertwined with high technology, and universities like UC are rapidly expanding their STEM research operations. The composition of higher ed labor will thus be increasingly STEM-heavy, bolstered by the Department of Defense, the weapons manufacturers, and other industries profiting from developing harmful technologies. It will take a powerful labor movement consisting of a large number of militant STEM workers to disrupt the war machine and protect the rights and safety of all workers and communities.

Concretely at this current moment, it is time to implement the try-and-tested research strike strategy around work-to-rule, which allows STEM workers to withhold labor in the long run. We need to expand the strike to include as many people and as much labor-time as possible to achieve maximum leverage, as well as ensuring that striking workers are protected from retaliation. All of this requires decisive action from the union leadership, which has thus far not gone beyond publicizing slogans, wasting mobilizing energies, while blaming STEM workers for its own inaction.

**We, STEM workers of UAW4811, insist that Rafael Jaime and the UAW4811 leadership comply with the popular mandate, seize this historical moment, and immediately call all UC campuses on strike for Palestine.**

## One Reply to “Police Repression of UCLA SJP Encampment Led to the UAW4811 Strike Vote—So Why Isn’t 4811 Leadership Calling UCLA Out on Strike?”



**Julia**

**MAY 22, 2024 AT 6:50 AM**

Thank you for this! So important! Rank and file UAW member from far north campus UCLA (information and library sciences), frustrated we aren’t seizing the moment for all the reasons you lay out! So many false narratives floating about to divide us and cause trepidation in this pivotal moment. See you on the picket line!!