



CPW-UAW

A UNION FOR POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHERS AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



CPW-UAW Bargaining Committee Statement Condemning Anti-Black Violence

Centuries of systemic racism, discrimination, and anti-Black violence have laid the foundation for the events of recent weeks. The senseless murders and lack of justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, and many others before them, and the outpouring of anger, frustration, protest, and solidarity across the nation in response, are an inevitable consequence of the institutionalized anti-Blackness of institutions across the United States, including Columbia University.

To our Black colleagues, mentors, mentees, friends, family, and Columbia community: those of us who do not walk in your shoes -- though we cannot fully grasp the depth of your grief, your righteous anger, and the injustice you confront daily -- are nonetheless shaken by these events and compelled to listen, to learn, and to act. Black voices in academia are necessary. Black Lives Matter.

As New Yorkers, we stand in solidarity with protestors and activists who are demanding justice, systemic change, and an end to police brutality. We condemn violence by NYPD against protestors and, more broadly, against Black communities across the city. We stand with MTA Transportation Workers and the TWU Local 100 union, who refused to transport arrested protestors on behalf of the NYPD. It is not lost on us that these events are taking place amid a global pandemic which disproportionately affects Black, Latinx, and Indigenous people, further endangering already-marginalized groups.

As representatives of our collective bargaining unit, we will continue to fight for equal access and opportunities for all, with real recourse and accountability in cases of workplace discrimination and retaliation. In our first contract, which we are currently negotiating, we would have new protections including, for the first time, the right to bring such cases to an arbitrator independent of the University. More broadly, we are fighting to improve pay and benefits such as healthcare, parental leave, and childcare. We recognize that we can do more as a bargaining committee to represent the needs and

interests of Black academics, and welcome feedback and ideas. We are committed to not only calling out racism and anti-Blackness on campus, but also acknowledging the role of Columbia University in perpetuating systemic discrimination, including within communities surrounding our campuses, many of which have been irreparably damaged by the practices of our institution. We will continue to call for reform of Columbia's practices surrounding policing and law enforcement, and also for recognition of the deeply entrenched racism and systemic oppression that is ubiquitous in academic campuses across this country.

Lastly, it is our job as a collective unit, and the job of every non-Black ally, to move beyond solidarity into reflection, awareness, self-education, and action, towards engaged anti-racism. Resources such as those provided [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) are a great place for allies to start.

In solidarity,

The CPW-UAW Bargaining Committee

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