SX Fact Finding Report

For nearly a year, UC has worked diligently to negotiate a fair contract for our valued Service workers. We are disappointed an agreement has not been reached.

The primary hurdle in negotiations has been AFSCME’s objection to necessary pension reform. Like many other employers including the state of California, UC is engaged in pension reform to protect the financial future of the pension program for all UC employees.

A report issued this week by the state’s neutral Fact Finder sides with UC on the core issue of pension reform, and endorses our proposal. The report also supports the university on many other operational matters contained in our service workers’ contract.

While the Fact Finder suggests some flexibility on wages, the university sees AFSCME’s request for an annual 8 percent increase as unrealistic given UC’s financial outlook, our salary budget, and the fact that Service staff have received wage increases over the past two years.

UC’s Service staff’s pay already compares favorably to both public and private sector employees:

- Minimum pay for a UC food service worker is 21 percent above CSU and 20 percent above the general market.
- Minimum pay for a UC senior custodian is 15 percent higher than at CSU and 3 percent above the general market.
- UC Service employees also recently received a 2 percent step increase on July 1, 2013, and up to 5 percent wage increases in each of the past two years. This was at a time when many other UC employees received nothing or significantly less.
- The university has done a great deal to address Service worker pay to the point that it leads the market in many instances.

It is also disappointing that instead of focusing on the Service workers’ contract and the primary obstacles to a settlement, AFSCME has directed energy towards staging demonstrations and Sacramento lobbying activity aimed at enforcing caps on pension benefits for union and non-union workers alike.
The university spends on average $19,000 a year on health, pension and other benefits for each Service employee and their children enrolled in the lowest-cost medical plan.

Here are the facts:

- AFSCME objects to the university’s pension proposal, and two other alternatives UC developed to advance discussions.
- AFSCME leaders want their members to contribute less than what it costs to pay out benefits and less than other UC employees in the same pension plan.
- AFSCME has not submitted its own alternative proposals, focused on their members’ specific needs.
- Eight unions representing 14 bargaining units have already agreed to UC’s plan, which also applies to faculty, unrepresented staff and senior leaders.
- UC’s pension benefits are more generous than what the legislature approved for other state workers and those at CSU.

We value the vital services that you deliver every day that enable our campuses and medical centers to run efficiently and seamlessly. Our goal has been and continues to be a fair and financially sustainable contract. We urge AFSCME leaders to work collaboratively to settle a contract as soon as possible.