

November 28, 2018

To UAW Region 9A Director Beverley Brakeman:

We, the undersigned members of the bargaining committee of Graduate Workers of Columbia-UAW Local 2110 (GWC), are writing to express our deep concern with the process behind reaching the *Framework Agreement between the UAW and Columbia University* of November 19, 2018.

The following timeline was presented to us together with the outline of the Agreement on the evening of November 18, 2018, whereas the full text of the Agreement was received in the meeting with the University Provost on November 19, 2018. It was acknowledged that Columbia University had reached out to the President of the International Union UAW Gary Jones some time in October, and had been shortly thereafter redirected to the Director of UAW Region 9A Beverley Brakeman. The Regional Director had then made a unilateral decision to enter a discussion over the terms of the potential agreement to bargain between GWC and the University, failing to notify the elected bargaining committee of GWC. The timeline has not been confirmed or clarified yet, despite the bargaining committee's requests.

Although the bargaining committee recognizes a huge victory in Columbia's admission of the significance of our strike threat, we object to the process that produced the Agreement. We express our disappointment with the decision made by the Regional Director. It is a troubling precedent, both in terms of internal governance, and in the way our Employer sees us as unworthy of direct and clear communication. In addition, it creates an impossible task for the bargaining committee to stand behind something we did not have a say in. Many of our workers have already been comparing this situation to the bargaining history at NYU, which makes it even more challenging to fight the anti-union rhetoric of UAW being a third party in our campaign. **This is precisely why we are fighting our Employer collectively, and we want to be sure that our International Union stands with us in this fight, amplifying our collective voice.**

More importantly, we would like to make sure that this procedure is not repeated in the future negotiations with the University. Many of our colleagues made it very clear that they will not accept any agreement reached under these circumstances. The lack of transparency in the process threatens to lead to fractures within GWC. Therefore, **the bargaining committee demands that all future communications between Columbia University and UAW leadership are presented to the committee within 48 hours in full and addressed collectively.** This is the only way forward that can result in fruitful

collaboration. Failure to do so will result in such agreements being turned down without any consideration.

In solidarity,

Bargaining Committee, Graduate Workers of Columbia-UAW Local 2110

Tania Bhattacharyya, History

Ian Bradley-Perrin, Sociomedical Sciences

Olga Brudastova, Civil Engineering and Engineering Mechanics

Noura Farra, Computer Science

Trevor Hull, Chemistry

Kate Jackson, Political Science

Rosalie Ray, Urban Planning

Takaya Uchida, Earth and Environmental Sciences

Angela Woodall, Communications