



**IVTU STATEMENT ON A COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT**

ISLA VISTA, CA -- We, the Isla Vista Tenants Union, write this statement in solidarity with and in support of the striking graduate students at UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz, and other COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) movements across the UC System.

Graduate students across the UC System suffer from rising costs of food and housing while watching their wages fall behind. Despite the invaluable nature of their labor to the workings of the universities that they attend, these student workers struggle to make ends meet at the end of the month. A problem faced by many in our community and across the state of California, rent has become an unbearable burden, consisting of over 51% of the typical graduate student's monthly incomes, with the majority of graduate students paying over 30% monthly. According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, this constitutes extreme rent burden. This has forced many graduate workers to take on additional part-time jobs on top of their studies, research, and many responsibilities as teaching assistants. This is not sustainable, nor is it fair.

As an advocacy entity whose mission is to fight for tenants in our community and advocate for tenant's issues, we believe that it is our duty to stand with our graduate students, and likewise demand a Cost of Living Adjustment for graduate workers relative to the cost of living in each locality. This adjustment would be placed on top of their current wages. As it stands, the cost of living in communities such as Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz is out of the reach of many graduate students, which is why we need a COLA now.

This COLA given to graduate student workers must not be paid for by increases in undergraduate or graduate student fees, and anyone who stands on the picket line or supports the movement should not be punished for asking for the decency to be treated fairly. This COLA should be recalculated annually to account for changes in the local housing market. At current calculations, UCSB 4 COLA is demanding a stipend of \$1,807.51 for all UCSB graduate students on top of the current average income of \$2,358 after fees.

We would also like to take this opportunity to condemn the violence and threats that are taking place against graduate students at other UC Campuses. Peaceful protest should never be met with riot gear, and deportation should never be a threat held over the head of workers.

The purpose of this movement is simple: our friends and neighbors live under the shadow of extreme rent burden. It is time that the university acknowledges this, understands the implications, and implements changes to bring their employees out of the shadow.

We stand with our friends, colleagues, and peers in demanding a COLA for our graduate workers at UC Santa Barbara and at the other UC Campuses. We call on other campus organizations, entities, undergraduate students, faculty, and staff to stand with the UCSB 4 COLA movement and voice their support.

In Solidarity,

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