

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, August 19, 2003

Contact:
Bill Meyerson
(203) 624-5161 x 309 or 203-214-9169 (cell)

Yale unions make major new proposal to settle contract, avert strike

Proposal seeks to “break out of the cycle of confrontation”

Saying they “want to break out of a cycle of confrontation,” Locals 34 and 35 made new proposals to Yale today. The ten-point package includes major changes in salary, job security and Yale-Union relations. “These proposals should jump-start negotiations,” said Local 34 President Laura Smith. “They send a strong message to Yale that now is the time to negotiate seriously, settle contracts and avert a strike.” A strike by 4,000 Yale workers is set for August 27.

The unions made significant modifications to their wage proposals. The Local 35 proposal calls for annual increases between three and four percent during a four year agreement. The corresponding increase in Local 34 vary between four and six percent. The higher figures for Local 34 reflect that fact that Yale’s wages lag significantly behind those at Southern Connecticut State University, UConn and Harvard. “Yale has sailed through the recession, and has not given us a raise in two years,” said Local 34 President Smith. “It’s time they started to catch up to the competition.

In response to requests from Yale, the unions also presented proposals for a six-year contract. These proposals add increases for Local 35 of 4.5% and 5% in the fifth and sixth years, and of 6.5% and 7% for Local 34. “This proposal tracks economic recovery and gradually increases our raises over time,” said Bob Proto.

The union proposals represent significant savings to Yale — over \$30 million over the life of a six year agreement.

Local 34 made an innovative job security proposal that promises heightened job security for individual employees and greater flexibility for Yale in subcontracting and implementing organizational changes, while allowing the union to grow as Yale grows over time. “This new concept represents a win-win situation for both sides. If Yale is serious about settling, they will embrace this proposal,” said Local 34 negotiating committee member Alexis Flint.

The unions also withdrew proposals relating to health care costs, parking, health and dental insurance, workers compensation, and funding best practices initiatives.

“We have one week left until the strike deadline, We are doing everything we can to avoid a strike. Now the ball is in Yale’s court,” said Laura Smith.