



colostate.gradworkers@gmail.com | csugradworkers.org | @csugradworkers

## **GWOC's statement regarding CSU Day of Giving 2022**

On May 3rd, CSU workers gathered at the CSU Fort Collins main campus to protest our wages and working conditions. We were graduate workers, tenured professors, non-tenure track faculty, facilities employees, and administrative professionals who all share the overwhelming feeling of being overworked and underpaid, especially when comparing our situation with our peer and aspirational peer universities.

Two days later, we all received an email from president Joyce McConnell announcing the CSU Day of Giving. Does this mean a day where the administration gives non-tenure track faculty the \$12,000 increase they need to match the yearly national average wage for NTT? Perhaps a day of giving faculty an 8% wage increase, so their wages keep pace with inflation? Or is it a day of giving graduate workers a 26% stipend increase, so that our stipends match the average of graduate workers at our peer institutions? No. Joyce McConnell announced that CSU Day of Giving is a day for its underpaid workers to donate part of their wages back to the university - just like graduate workers do every semester, paying \$1,260 (on average) in student fees to keep our jobs.

This outrageous request was topped by even more absurd situations in some colleges, like in the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, where the dean announced a "challenge": the top two departments with the highest rates of participation in this donation day will get additional money for scholarship funds. On a campus where 32% of students experience food insecurity, somehow it seemed like a good idea to promise extra funding for departments in which their members already have the financial means to take part in this "challenge". Would it not make more sense to just provide these scholarship funds to the departments that need it most?

While wealthy alumni donations may benefit specific programs within the university, asking underpaid faculty and staff to contribute to the Day of Giving is insulting, especially following the budget presentation made to the Board of Governors this week. Despite repeated crisis rhetoric from president McConnell and her staff, Colorado State University is NOT in a precarious financial arrangement, and could immediately make changes to dramatically improve the lives of those who do the work required to fulfill our badly needed public mission. Instead of a lifevest, the administration offers a brick to those of us who are drowning: incremental "merit increases" that amount to a pay cut after factoring in the cost of living. As workers, we stand and organize together in hopes of a real Day of Giving, where the University gives what is needed: enough pay to maintain a decent livelihood.