

UAW Seeks To Represent Postdocs; Lab Information Meeting Friday

The United Auto Workers Union (UAW) has begun to visit various UC campuses, including Berkeley Lab, with the objective of organizing postdoctoral fellows. The UAW has been contacting postdocs here at the Lab and has been asking them to sign cards to authorize the union to exclusively represent them.

Under the law, a union can be certified as the exclusive representative if it obtains valid written authorizations from 50% plus one of the employees in the proposed bargaining unit. If that occurs, the UAW would become the exclusive bargaining representative for the postdocs, without a secret ballot election. Accordingly, employees should ensure that any document they sign expresses their intent.

Bill Elkins, Berkeley Lab's Manager for Labor and Employee Relations, confirmed that the UAW has contacted postdocs here at the Lab. "Our postdocs have become the subject of an organizational drive by the UAW to establish a union for postdocs," he said. "The Lab and UC take no position when it comes to the right of employees to form a union. The important thing from the Lab's perspective is that employees make an informed choice as to whether or not to be exclusively represented for purposes of collective bargaining."

Elkins said that separate informational meetings will be held for postdocs and their supervisors starting tomorrow. Employees interested in learning more about these issues should attend one of these meetings, which will be held in the Building 50 auditorium:

Supervisors/Managers of Postdocs -- Friday, June 30, 9 a.m.;
Monday, July 3, 9 a.m.

Postdocs Only-- Friday, June 30, 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.; Monday, July 3, 11 a.m.;
Friday, July 7, 9:30 a.m.

Postdoc attendance is voluntary.