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for Economic Justice

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As CLUE, we educate, organize, and mobilize the faith community to accompany workers and their families in their struggle for good jobs, dignity, and justice.

July 5, 2023

To: Joe Garciaros, Human Resources
Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa

CC: Rich Leib, Chair of the UC Board of Regents
Michael V. Drake, President of the University of California
Jagdeep Singh Bachher, Chief Investment Officer for the UC Pension Fund

Re: Negotiate a Fair Contract and Hire Black and African-American Workers

Dear Mr. Garciaros:

On behalf of Black members of Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, we are greatly alarmed to learn both about the poor working and living conditions of your staff at Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa, and the lack of diversity at your establishment — particularly the failure of your hotel to hire Black and African-American workers.

It is our understanding that of the 225 or so members of the Unite Here Local 11 bargaining unit who currently work at your hotel, you currently employ very few Black workers.

We have also come to learn that today, as your permanent workers strike to protest their unjust working conditions, your hotel has hired Black and African-American *temporary* workers through an agency to break the strike.

It is lamentable that the Laguna Cliffs Marriott has employed few to any Black union permanent staff, and yet when in need of strike-breakers you are somehow able to find and hire Black *temporary* workers through an agency. It is repulsive that you would push Black hotel workers to suffer the great indignity of breaking the strike of fellow poverty wage hotel workers.

In addition to this failure, it is also our understanding that many hotels have managed to earn well beyond pre-pandemic profits, yet have not returned to pre-pandemic staffing, resulting in understaffing that requires current employees to perform increased, burdensome workloads for the same low wages. Workers are demanding fair staffing and wages.

Therefore we urge you to do the following:

1. negotiate and settle a fair contract that directly addresses the workers' grave need for living wages, an adequate pension, health care, and affordable housing; and
2. in order to offset post-pandemic understaffing, we call on you *to offer permanent jobs to all of the Black and African-American workers who you have just sought to*

hire temporarily through an agency to break the strike, so that they might work with dignity alongside your current workers.

A fair living wage, adequate pension, health care, affordable housing, and human dignity should be a God given right for every worker. When workers are treated fairly, they then can develop their creativity, develop their talents, plan out their lives, live out their faith, and give glory to God. It is essential that as a society we continue to prioritize the goal of access to good steady employment for everyone. We were created with a vocation to work.

Thank you for addressing our concerns, and those of your hard-working staff.

Sincerely,

Rev. Gary Bernard Williams
Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE)
Board Chair

The Rev. Canon Dr. Pat McCaughan, Vicar
St. George's Episcopal Church
Laguna Hills

Connie J. Jones
Second Baptist Church
Santa Ana

Rev. Christy Ann Clark
Assistant Minister Saint Mark United Methodist Church and Strengthening the Black Village

Rev. Lamont Hartman
Reconcile Church, Lead Pastor
Santa Ana & Los Angeles

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Hollypark United Methodist Church
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Pastor William D. Smart Jr.
Co-Pastor Christ Liberation Ministries
President/ CEO Southern Christian Leadership Conference -Southern California

Gil Leib
Dr Martin Luther King, Jr Westside Coalition

Margari Hill
Executive Director of Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative