

My name is Sophia DiMatteo. I am a second year art and politics double major student at UCSC, I am on full financial aid and am already nearly \$10,000 in debt with at least 2 more years left at UCSC. Like my fellow students, I am deeply worried about the debt I am incurring to put myself through school. This debt burden is something we shouldn't have to worry about at a public institution which was designed to be free for California residents. With tuition going up 27% in the next 5 years, by the time my little sister goes to college, school will cost her just under \$40,000.

Does \$40,000 sound like a public institution to you? The continual privatization of the UC system is a clear form of institutional racism and class-warfare, as it makes higher education more and more exclusive to the upper-class and converts our education into a flow of money. The Regents and UC administration have attacked our livelihoods as students, and we have taken a clear stand against them in our act of civil disobedience. With the former head of the Department of Homeland Security appointed as the head of the UC system, the interests of the state are clear- prioritizing profit and militarization over a truly functional and accessible education system. When we pay to study here, the Regents profit; they count on our obedience, and threaten free speech and political dissent with riot cops funded by our tuition money. We become criminals in the eyes of the state when we resist this oppression. But the Regents, bankers, and police are the real criminals in this society, upholding white-supremacist, racist, classist principles and institutions. The state violence we are up against is not to be taken lightly, and must be actively resisted. We will not stand for the systemic murder of black and brown folks by the state, we will not tolerate the militarization of these racist institutions and the fact that they can exist and continue to violently threaten communities of color, we will not tolerate the fact that marginalized people are targeted and incarcerated, denied access to public education, and we will not tolerate the privatization of our education.

Our action was organized as part of a UC-wide 96 hours of action against tuition hikes and police brutality. We felt the urgent need to raise our voices and take action to expose the injustices the state commits, specifically regarding the sky-rocketing cost of "public" education and the epidemic of police murder targeting Black and Brown people regularly across the nation. With the world as it is, we will continue to raise our voices as part of the struggle for change.