

Northwestern University Library Workers Union (NULWU) -- SEIU Local 73, is opposed to the recent arrest and class A misdemeanor charge of a member of our bargaining unit and three other Northwestern community members for being present on Deering Meadow on the morning of April 25, 2024. The arrests were made by the Northwestern University Police Department (NUPD) two months after the event. As a labor union, we are troubled that the University administration is using the NUPD to discipline fellow staff and faculty. We know what this really is: an act of intimidation to keep workers from using their academic freedom to criticize the administration.

Nonviolent acts of protest are an important part of academic life on any college campus. Our speech is supposed to be protected by the university's own academic freedom policy. Additionally, in [contract negotiations](#) we fought and won the right to demonstrate off the clock. Yet, we are seeing an [uptick](#) of students and faculty charged with crimes for nonviolent protest.

Library workers are often called to intervene in tense situations in order to protect our patrons. The bargaining unit member was present on Deering Meadow that day to help mediate between students who were part of the encampment and the police. Our colleague has been charged with "resisting/obstructing a peace officer," a painfully ironic accusation as their actions exemplified what it means to be a librarian by supporting our students and their right to academic freedom.

Like the other students, faculty, and staff at the Palestinian solidarity encampment that day, our member did not act with violence or hate against police or any other person. Therefore, NULWU calls on the Illinois State's Attorney Kim Foxx to immediately drop all charges against the four Northwestern community members who were arrested.