FROM THE FRONT

"It's raining men! Hallelujah!"
"IT'S RAINING MEN" THE WEATHER GIRLS

Yale unions rally for higher pay amid negotiations

UNIONS FROM PAGE 1

office, said. "I feel I should be able to continue to do the work that I've done for 19 years to uphold Yale's mission, a mission that I believe in, and buy a home here."

Ensuring wages keep up with inflation is a top priority for the unions, according to Ian Dunn, a spokesperson for Local 34 and Local 35, who said the crowd was 2,000 strong.

"This is a time for us to take control of inflation from the past six years," Dunn said.

Dunn said the unions hoped to emphasize the positivity and solidarity of the unions and the negotiations.

The speakers were joined on stage by the Rev. Scott Marks, the head of New Haven Rising, and Alder Brian Wingate, the vice president of Local 35. Alder Jeanette Morrison and Elias Theodore '27, the Democratic nominee for Ward 1 alder, were also in the crowd.

As more people took the mic, the focus shifted from the specific contract negotiations to broader testimonies to the strength of unions and collective advocacy.

"We're fighting for a city where students do not have to live in fear for a future," Brandon Daley, a junior at Metropolitan Business Academy, said. "We've won before. We will win again. We've demanded local hiring, and we've won revenue increases for New Haven. This is our city."

Adam Waters GRD '26 — the president of Local 33, Yale's graduate student union — spoke in front of the crowd, reflecting on the sustained relationship between graduate students and other Yale workers.

Norah Laughter '26, the head of activist group Students Unite Now, who lost the Democratic primary for Ward 1 alder earlier this month, guessed that over 100 Yale undergraduate students showed up to the rally.

The director of organizing for the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, John LaChapelle, came from Portland, Conn., for the event, standing with the painters and tradespeople who worked inside Yale.

"Push the union, baby. It's all about the union, man," LaChapelle said between puffs of his cigar.

The current contracts for Local 34 and Local 35 will expire in January 2027.

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As Locals 34 and 35 seek to renegotiate their contracts with Yale, nearly 2,000 students, union organizers and local leaders gathered on Thursday in a demonstration of strength. / **Logan Dinkins, Contributing Photographer**



Logan Dinkins / Contributing Photographer

Dozens protest at television station not airing Kimmel

BY ABDEL ABDU
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Dozens protested outside a local news station Thursday afternoon in response to its parent company's refusal to air comedian Jimmy Kimmel's recently reinstated show.

The Connecticut Citizen Action Group, an advocacy group headquartered in Hartford, organized the protest at WTNH's station in downtown New Haven after Nexstar Media Group, which owns WTNH, announced it would keep "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" off air even after the show was reinstated Tuesday by ABC.

Disney, ABC's parent company, suspended Kimmel's show last week after the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission suggested his agency may take action against ABC for Kimmel's comments about the assassination of Charlie Kirk.

"The fact that they will not have Jimmy Kimmel on is just a symptom of the problem," Christine McGregor, a resident of West Haven, said. "But the disease is censorship."

McGregor was among dozens of protesters gathered in front of the WTNH 8 News building at the intersection of Elm and State Streets.

"I would like people to start watching WTNH News with a very discriminating view," McGregor said. "We don't know now whether Nexstar is also affecting what the local reporting is on WTNH."

According to their website, Nexstar Media Group is the largest media company in the nation, with over 200 local television stations nationwide, including more than 30 ABC affiliates.

"We have been advised to decline comment," WTNH's managing editor Joseph Wenzel wrote in an email to the New Haven Independent on Thursday.

Other protestors shared McGregor's view that the protest was about more than just the refusal to air "Jimmy Kimmel Live!"

"History is repeating itself with this administration," Bethany resident James Stirling said, comparing the targeting of shows like "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" by the Trump administration to the censorship experienced in the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany and China.

Stirling echoed other protestors' concerns that the government was preventing stations like WTNH from airing what actual residents wanted.

Stirling said that he hoped that local stations and private companies would exercise their right to broadcast in response to public opinion, not pressure from the government.

Alongside the local residents who attended the protest, also several local officials who shared their own concerns about the decision to keep "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" off the air. Among them were Middletown state Sen. Matt Lesser, Stratford state Rep. Kaitlyn Shake and Ward 7 Alder Eli Sabin '22 LAW '26.

"No administration has fired someone because they don't like what they're saying," Sen. Lesser told the crowd, referring to Kimmel. "What is the next issue they'll sell us out on?"

Shake and Sabin echoed protestors' concerns about how the federal government was exerting pressure on both journalists and media companies.

"They try to get unfriendly reporters off the air. They try to sue outlets," Sabin told protestors, criticizing the pressure the Trump administration has placed on media organizations as censorship.

Comments from the three politicians were met with applause from protestors, while cars driving by on State Street honked their horns in support of the protest. Protestors also carried signs with a variety of free speech messages including, "Censorship is un-American!" and "STOP Media Censorship Nexstar!"

The signs and statements shared by both speakers and protestors reflect the organization's goal to condemn government censorship, CCAG associate director Liz Dupont-Diehl told the protestors.

The fact that the protest so quickly gained attention despite being organized the day before reveals just how much people care about the issue of free speech, Dupont-Diehl said.

But protestors are concerned about more than Kimmel's cancellation, she said.

"Jimmy Kimmel's okay, but we don't need corporations bowing to the federal government," she told the crowd.

Jimmy Kimmel Live! Was suspended by ABC on Sept. 17 and reinstated on Sept. 22.

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Citing free speech concerns, the Connecticut Citizen Action Group protested outside WTNH 8 News over their refusal to air Jimmy Kimmel Live after ABC returned the show. / **Logan Dinkins, Contributing Reporter**