“DEFUND, DISCLOSE, DIVEST”:
Protestors urge UNH to pull funding from Israel

Protestors took to Thompson Hall Lawn Thursday night to demand UNH pull funding from Israeli-based businesses amidst the ongoing crisis in Gaza

Abigail Driscoll, Staff Writer

On Thursday evening a group of protestors came together on Thompson Hall (T-Hall) Lawn in solidarity with Palestine, as well as crowds of students and demonstrators demanding change from universities across the country in their financial support of Israeli-based companies. The protests have been brought about since Israel’s reaction to an attack led by Hamas on Oct. 7, which has since claimed the lives of 34,979 Palestinians and 1,139 people in Israel.

The demonstration was in support of the several campus-wide demonstrations across the country, with one notable example taking place at Columbia University, which includes encampments of students and non-students alike. The protests have resulted in hundreds of arrests and even the cancellation of commencement ceremonies at the University of Southern California.

The protest at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) was organized by the UNH Palestine Solidarity Coalition (PSC), a group dedicated to speaking out about the ongoing crisis and standing in support of the people of Palestine. The event was co-sponsored by a multitude of other organizations, including but not limited to the UNH Muslim Student Association, UNH Black Student Union and the New Hampshire Youth Movement.

“We call for immediate disclosure from the administration regarding the investments of the University of New Hampshire,” the group said in a press release sent out on Thursday, “and demand divestment from institutions and companies directly contributing to the ongoing genocide, occupation and apartheid in Palestine.”
ALL OUT TO UNH!

In solidarity with the people of Palestine and campus actions around the country we demand divestment from Israeli genocide and a permanent ceasefire!

Thursday, April 25th at 5 PM
Thompson Hall Lawn, University of New Hampshire

The Palestinian Solidarity Coalition calls on students, faculty, staff, and the people of NH to come out tonight, Thursday April 25th, for a rally demanding UNH divest its $475 million endowment from genocide! This moment requires us all to show solidarity with student-led encampments across the country currently facing reactionary police-state violence, and to loudly repeat the call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine!

We also call on the UNH Senate to stand with its students and follow the lead of the Graduate Student Senate, calling on UNH to divest from the Israeli settler-colonial occupation!

Our universities have chosen profit and reputation over the lives of the people of Palestine and our will as students. The supposed power of our administrators is nothing compared to the strength of the united students, staff, and faculty committed to realizing justice and upholding Palestinian liberation on campus.

As we enter the seventh month of genocide which has taken over 34,305 Palestinian lives including at least 14,778 children, not including over 7,000 people missing under the rubble, our calls for immediate ceasefire and divestment remain as urgent and steadfast as ever.

We call for immediate disclosure from the administration regarding the investments of the University of New Hampshire and demand divestment from institutions and companies directly contributing to the ongoing genocide, occupation and apartheid in Palestine. These institutions include weapons manufacturing companies, Israeli universities, and sectors of the American government. As student services continue to be cut and departments struggle to gather their resources, profits from endowment funds pay unreasonable salaries to higher ups in the administration at the cost of UNH students. The university's relationship with known weapons manufacturers such as Elbit Systems and Sig Sauer, which produce weaponry used on Palestinians, is public knowledge but we additionally call for disclosure on the whole of the university's investments totaling $475 million. Divestment now!

We stand united in our fight for Palestinian liberation! We stand with students resisting state oppression and protesting for Palestine here on college campuses in the United States. There are no universities left in Gaza, they have all been bombed by the "Israeli" occupation, so we are reclaiming our universities for the people and students of Palestine!

Co-sponsoring orgs:

Southern New Hampshire for Palestine
PSL Southern New Hampshire
Diversity Support Coalition UNH Executive Board
New Hampshire Youth Movement
Muslim Student Association UNH
Black Student Union UNH
United Asian Coalition UNH
Middle Eastern Cultural Association UNH
UNH MOSAICO (Latine Student Org)
Indonesian Student Association UNH
Worker's Congress

The press release that came out prior to the protest.
The press release also cited the university's known ties to companies such as Elbit Systems and Sig Sauer, both defense and weapons manufacturers with ties to Israel. In an interview with New Hampshire Public Radio, Tania deLuzuriaga, a UNH spokesperson, stated that such divestment could impact research and student services, and that 0.5% of the referenced $475 million endowment goes to Israeli companies.

The protest included speeches from students, staff and local residents aiming to get their voices heard.

“I once looked to Israel as a protector as many other Jews did worldwide...” said Joshua Meyrowitz, a communications professor at UNH. “If Israel's actions in Gaza were really about dismantling Hamas, I would not be calling for an immediate ceasefire.”

Meyrowitz emphasized that Israel's actions shall not be done in the name of the Jewish people.

“We don't even have the funding here for food, for housing...” said Adeena Ahsan, a member of the UNH PSC who organized the event. “Enough is enough.”

“If fossil fuels can be an important enough issue for them to do something about, why not this?” Ahsan asked in an interview with WMUR. “This is a human rights issue.”

Ahsan also emphasized their message of peace, and acknowledged the support of Jewish fellow organizers.

Ava Montalbano, a fourth-year communication major at UNH, said the whole situation has been really distressing, but she had been hoping to see something like Thursday's demonstration organized.

“It feels like our representatives aren't listening.” Montalbano said.

She went on to say it felt like the university was not responding to the issue at all.

“I'm sure there are students here that are being impacted more closely than we think,” she said. “You're supposed to feel represented by your university, and cared for, and I feel like that's lacking from our administration.”
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