



Students
celebrate free
laundry
Page 2



'Project Hail
Mary' breaks
box office
Page 4



Lacrosse and
softball teams
face defeat
Page 6

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Campus protests after ICE detains student

“ICE out. ICE out.” Those words echoed across campus on Monday, April 6, as approximately 150 students, faculty members, student organizations and local community groups gathered for a peaceful protest in support of a university nursing student who was recently detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The demonstration, held in response to the student’s detention, drew members of the campus community and residents from the surrounding area, many holding signs and chanting in solidarity.

According to university officials and local reports, the nursing student, identified as Keyla, a junior, was taken into custody by ICE on Thursday, April 2 while off campus in another municipality.

In a message sent to students and staff, university leadership confirmed the detention and emphasized that no ICE activity had taken place on campus.

“Our priority remains the safety, well-being and dignity of everyone at Southern. We are committed to supporting anyone affected and making sure our campus remains a safe and welcoming place for all,” Bulmer said.

Outside of Buley Library during the protest, Bulmer echoed this message and commended students for the large turnout.

“So proud of the students who’ve come together to be passionate about this cause, and it’s really heartening to see our community right now,” Bulmer said.



PHOTOS | LILY RAND

Students, staff and members from local community groups gathering in front of Buley Library on Monday, April 6, to protest in support of a student who was detained by U.S Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

“There’s people who are feeling afraid and concerned, and that’s not good for our community. We value being a welcoming and inclusive space, so anything that threatens that is concerning to us.”

Interdisciplinary studies major and state senate candidate Justin Farmer, a junior, and Sam Morrison, a graduate, introduced several speakers to the crowd. “I don’t care if people want to be a streetsweeper or a neurosurgeon. All of our rights should be upheld,” Farmer said.

Farmer also revealed that this act of injustice hits very close to home, as his uncle and two brothers were captured by ICE when Farmer was just 10 years old.

“People have community now to talk about it,” Farmer said. “So, I want young folks who are going

through it now to realize that this is not normal.”

The first speaker was psychology major and President of the Communist Club Tatum Kerr, a junior.

“We are here today with a clear demand,” Kerr said. “Our student must be brought home now.” Kerr encouraged everyone to come together as a community. However, she expressed that this is the first step.

“As students and workers, we must make it clear that we will mobilize and unite to bring our student home. If ICE is in our state, in our streets, targeting any of our students or community members, we will stand together, and we will fight until we win,” Kerr said.

Political science major and President of the College Democrats Cynthia Sanchez, a junior, was another student

speaker during the event. Sanchez opened her speech by calling out the fear that she has been carrying since she was a young girl growing up in New Haven — the fear of her loved ones not making it home.

“This right here is my passport,” Sanchez said. “Since the Trump administration started, I’ve carried it everywhere with me.”

Sanchez held her evidence of citizenship up to the crowd of protesters, representing the fear she holds every day.

“But today, I face my fear to stand and speak for those who do not have the privilege of doing so,” Sanchez said.

Sanchez hopes that other members of the community will follow suit and stand as a campus community to unite and fight against ICE and other injustices

throughout Connecticut.

“I’m here to speak up for the injustice that happened to one of our students off campus a week ago,” Sanchez said, “a student who is described as one that lights up the room, a daughter and a brilliant student that pushes herself through academic rigor with hard work and determination.”

Members beyond the campus community also stood in solidarity and spoke out during the protest.

Marcela Branca, a member of Stamford Norwalk United with Immigrants, urged protesters to not normalize the injustices that are unfolding in the community.

“They are taking our kids, our teachers, brothers, parents and neighbors,” Branca said. “They are taking our

collective freedom.” Business administration major and President of the UndocuAlly Student Alliance Jerimiah Parra, a junior, spoke inspiring words to the crowd.

“In times like these, it is important more than ever that we stand united,” Parra said. “Strength comes from the community, and together, we can uplift one another.”

Nursing major Richard Bovil, a senior, was passing by on his way from class and stopped to listen.

“I think this protest is very important because it raises awareness to what is going on in the community,” Bovil said. “It feels a little good to know that other people know that this is an issue and that other people will stand to fight against it.”

Interim President Sandra Bulmer released a statement following the news, advocating that the university has one mission.

The protest closed out with chants of: “Bring them home! Bring them home!”

Speakers also encouraged protesters to contribute towards the legal fees and bail for the nursing student who was detained by ICE.

The GoFundMe is located at CT Students For a Dream website.

As of Monday, \$1,615 of their goal of \$10,000 has been donated.

This story was a collaboration between Editor-in-Chief Solé Scott, Managing Editor Jay’Mi Vazquez, News Editor Brianna Wallen and News Writer Victoria Cruz.



Protesters holding up signs to promote their cause of abolishing ICE and protecting families while speakers lead the protest.



Interdisciplinary studies major and state senate candidate Justin Farmer, a junior, speaking up against the injustices on the steps of Buley Library.



Locals from New Haven as well as students and faculty of the campus community holding up signs during the peaceful protest.



Crowd members uniting to listen to speakers, holding up their signs and showing solidarity.



Protesters standing together holding up signs to show their support.