



INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA-UAW

DENNIS WILLIAMS, President



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PRINTED IN U.S.A.

GARY CASTEEL, Secretary-Treasurer

December 5, 2014

Office of the President  
202 Low Library  
535 West 116th Street  
New York, NY 10027

Dear President Bollinger:

A majority of research and teaching assistants at Columbia University have formed a union in order to improve our working conditions and make the university a better and more accessible institution for teaching, research, and learning. We urge the university to respect our choice by engaging in a fair, expedient, and democratic process to recognize Graduate Workers of Columbia-United Auto Workers (GWC-UAW) as our union.

Our work--teaching, performing grant-winning research, and supporting daily operations--is essential to the life of this university and to Columbia's standing as a respected and highly ranked university. Like hundreds of employees at Columbia and tens of thousands of student workers who already have unions at more than 60 university campuses across the United States, we deserve the voice and respect we will gain through collective bargaining. Although we are integral members of Columbia's academic community, we have experienced precarious funding, late paychecks, unmanageable rent increases, inadequate medical coverage for ourselves and our families, job and wage insecurity, a lack of transparency in administrative policies, and a lack of professionalism that stems from our labor not being recognized as work.

Like other workers, we deserve living wages, adequate benefits, clear workload expectations, and consistent and transparent employment policies. The security we will enjoy when we are able to negotiate the terms of our employment will allow us to take greater pride in the work we do for the university and ensure the integrity of our own education and research. Collective bargaining will make us full members of the academic community and make Columbia University a stronger and more democratic institution.

As a majority of us have already chosen to form a union, we ask that Columbia University respect our choice by remaining neutral on the question of unionization and agreeing to a fair and efficient process to recognize our union without delay.

Sincerely,

Julie Kushner  
Director Region 9a

Maida Rosenstein  
President Local 2110

Graduate Workers of Columbia-UAW

CC:

John Coatsworth, Provost, Columbia University  
Amale Andraos, Dean, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation  
Marit E. Janow, Dean, School of International and Public Affairs  
Linda P. Fried, Dean, Mailman School of Public Health  
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Carol Becker, Dean of the School of the Arts  
Carlos Alonso, Dean, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences  
Glenn Hubbard, Dean, Columbia Business School  
Jeanette C. Takamura, Dean, School of Social Work

