

Dear President Hamilton,

During the 2016-2017 academic year, the NYU Student Labor Action Movement took various actions to implement students on the Board of Trustees. These attempts were met with varying degrees of disapproval from yourself and members of the administration. Unfortunately, SLAM does not see your initial decision as a setback, but rather an opportunity to prove that *your* students want representation and transparency on the Board of Trustees, and will not stop until we get it.

Per your suggestion, we proceeded with our resolution through the school's established channels for student power that you have long championed, only to be thwarted when you went against your promise to put the resolution on the University Senate's agenda. This is unacceptable. The student body no longer has time for bureaucratic dead-ends. As the framers of our Federal Constitution remarked,

"Our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury."

You may think students on the Board would be a conflict of interest, but if this university has given us anything, it is the skill to rise to challenges and to relentlessly believe in our abilities. Without student power, this university would cease to promote the democratic ethos it so ferociously wants to maintain. We are here to help you do that, to help NYU be the shining example it is known to be for this country's academic community. In his own fight for student representation at NYU, Mayor Bill de Blasio said the following:

"Students should be able to have more knowledge about the Board of Trustees' meetings... They should be able to express their ideas and hear the proceedings... Input is the issue."

We know you're skeptical to provide students with such power, as only 21 percent of private universities have student trustees. Even so, it makes us wonder why someone who has praised NYU for being a beacon of innovation wouldn't want NYU to stand with Cornell and Amherst at the forefront of the student power movement. The number of student trustees is increasing, NYU should be leading this stride, just as we did in the Fight for \$15.

Your commitment to affordability would be solidified by introducing student trustees. As you noted one of your emails to the student population, "Affordability has been a priority since my very first weeks as President, and it remains so." Now is your chance to prove this to your students. Otherwise, your history of ignoring student financial insecurity will live on. As Vice-Chancellor at Oxford, you argued that a university's fees should rise from £9,000 to £16,000, prioritizing a university's competitiveness over the needs of its students. Those who can afford such increases in tuition are already top competitors. We hope you are true to your words that, "We are guided by high principles- academic freedom,

openness, inclusiveness, and diversity,” and do all you can to make NYU a financially inclusive institution. This starts with representation.

The necessary condition for any university to further ideals of prosperity and excellence is the presence of a student body. Only students will allow NYU to attain these characteristics, in the classroom, and on the Board. We hope in time you will manifest this realization with the introduction of elected Student Trustees.

Onward,
The Student Labor Action Movement

P.S. - Attached is a clipping from a 1983 Washington Square News headline, when Bill de Blasio, FKA Bill Wilhelm, organized students in the effort of putting students on the Board. He started this fight and we will end it.