



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

November 30, 2016

Dear Columbia University Research and Teaching Assistants:

Congratulations on the successful NLRB decision restoring the right to collective bargaining for RAs and TAs at private universities.

You will have the opportunity to vote on December 7th and 8th on whether to join more than 35,000 UAW RAs and TAs at 45 university campuses across the United States who have successfully negotiated strong union contracts with improvements to pay, benefits and workplace rights. The UAW is a strong progressive and experienced voice for academic workers.

At New York University, for example, based on 18 years of organizing and bargaining with the support of the UAW, TAs and RAs have a collective bargaining agreement that makes its graduate employees some of the highest-paid and well-treated in the U.S. The agreement also makes NYU a more competitive, accessible and inclusive institution.

Prior to the NLRB decision, I and many other elected leaders stood in support of your union rights and urged Columbia to respect your democratic choice on this issue. I believe collective bargaining is a fair process and that the stability and predictability of a union contract will enable you to focus more of your energy on the critical research and teaching work that makes Columbia a world-renowned university – one of the great treasures of New York City.

As an alum of Columbia and NYU, and as an elected leader, I respect the critical work you do every day. By teaching thousands of undergraduates and conducting innovative research that helps bring roughly \$1 billion in grants and contracts to the University each year, RAs and TAs make Columbia a world leader academically and make it an important economic engine in New York City.

I wish you the very best as you exercise your historic right to vote for union representation in the upcoming NLRB election. I look forward to hearing the results of the election and to working with you toward a more just and equitable city for all New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bill de Blasio'.

Bill de Blasio
Mayor