



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

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GARY CASTEEL, Secretary-Treasurer

June 1, 2018

CC: Secretary Jerome Davis

Dear Columbia University Trustees,

As elected representatives of Graduate Workers of Columbia-UAW Local 2110, we write to request a meeting with you as soon as possible to convey our growing concerns with the Columbia administration's defiance of federal labor law by refusing to bargain with our union.

In mid-April, after a decisive strike authorization vote by research and teaching assistants, we wrote to the Trustees asking for your help urging the administration to start bargaining in the hopes of averting a pending strike.

As Columbia instead continued to defy the law and clear will of the majority of graduate workers, RAs and TAs engaged in one of the largest work stoppages in the history of the university. More than 1,500 of us picketed on the first day of the strike, generating wide coverage in the [New York Times](#), [Washington Post](#), [New Republic](#), and National Public Radio, among other venues.

The day after the strike, Harvard University announced it would comply with the law and start bargaining with its graduate workers. Harvard joins NYU, The New School, Brandeis University, Tufts University and American University as part of the growing number of major private universities that have honored the results of graduate worker votes on unionization and started bargaining. Columbia increasingly stands out in its efforts to roll back democratic union rights.

Graduate workers would prefer to avoid further strike action, but will do so if the university continues its current course and we will do so knowing that growing numbers of supporters stand with us on and off campus. It has now been more than 17 months since graduate workers voted by an overwhelming 72 percent – with a margin of nearly 1,000 ballots – in support of GWC-UAW. Columbia has not only ignored the growing majority support among graduate workers, but also the voices of more than 200 elected and community leaders, [hundreds of faculty](#), [nearly 2,500 alums](#), 70 student groups, the [Columbia Spectator](#), and now Harvard.

Given your fiduciary and other responsibilities for governing this great university, we earnestly request an opportunity to meet with you in the hopes that Columbia will avoid diverting any more resources on fruitless litigation trying to suppress our collective bargaining rights.

Please let us know when you would be available, we can be reached at columbiagradunion@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Julie Kushner, Director, UAW Region 9A
Maida Rosenstein, President, UAW Local 2110

Graduate Workers of Columbia – UAW Local 2110, Bargaining Committee

Tania Bhattacharyya, History
Ian Bradley-Perrin, Sociomedical Sciences
Olga Brudastova, Civil Engineering and Engineering Mechanics
Noura Farra, Computer Science
Trevor Hull, Chemistry

Kate Jackson, Political Science
Rosalie Ray, Urban Planning
Justin Steinfeld, Integrated Program
Takaya Uchida, Earth and Environmental Sciences
Angela Woodall, Communications