
Letter to the editor

Published: Sunday, June 7, 2009

Updated: Sunday, June 7, 2009

Dear Editor,

As Tufts alumni, we were very dismayed to learn recently of University President Lawrence Bacow's efforts to suppress the organizing efforts of the Tufts Employee Association on campus.

This is not the Tufts that we know and that we hold dear. The Tufts that we graduated from emphasized its role in preparing students and alumni to be global citizens, in fostering a sense of community and a commitment to service and justice. The university administration's current heavy-handed efforts to discourage the administrative and clerical employees from choosing to form a union are anathema to the values upon which Tufts has been built. These employees help make Tufts such an amazing place of learning, and they deserve to decide how, and whether, to organize themselves, free from inappropriate interference, pressure and coercion from the administration.

For students and alumni, Tufts is and always will be a place of study. It is easy to forget that for the employees who make Tufts run, from the custodial staff to the professors, Tufts is also their employer. As an employer, and one with a stated commitment to the needs of the community, Tufts has an obligation to treat its employees with fairness and dignity. The decision of whether to form a union belongs to the employees alone.

Sadly, recent history is filled with numerous examples of universities using every tactic at their disposal to undermine employee efforts to organize. It would be tragic if Tufts joined this unfortunate and self-defeating trend. If the university administration really wants to show its administrative and clerical staff that they are appreciated and respected, it will stop trying to interfere with their communications on this question and let them decide for themselves.

With many alumni (including some of us signing this letter) returning soon to campus for reunions, and elections for the Tufts Board of Trustees coming up, we expect that this will be a topic of much discussion among those of us who are proud to call Tufts our alma mater. We encourage President Bacow and the university administration to stop its use of tactics of disinformation and pressure to try to sway the decision of its employees.

Sincerely,

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