

Illini Public Affairs Committee
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



IlliniPAC

503 E John St.
Champaign, IL 61820

December 1, 2015

To the University of Illinois Board of Trustees and Urbana-Champaign community:

We are concerned about the rise of racism on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus. The November incident of a racist Facebook page, the March incident of students hanging a Confederate flag, and continued incidents of students' inappropriate language on social apps led the Daily Illini to declare that "*racism is alive and well at the University of Illinois.*" While we appreciate that Chancellor Wilson, Provost Feser, and Vice Chancellor Romano all forcefully expressed intolerance for such hateful acts on our campus we believe more can be done.

As student leaders of major Jewish-affiliated organizations on campus, we stand in solidarity with the African American student community in asking the UI Board of Trustees to take further action in addressing the issue of race affecting too many students. As one of the only universities to have a diversity program since 1985, it is vital that our University sets the precedent for action. We commend and echo Student Trustee Jaylin McClinton's call for the development of an action plan that will firmly recognize race issues and execute effective solutions regarding systematic barriers that perpetuate race inequalities on campus. In addition, we call for increased resources for the Office of Minority Student Affairs.

We sympathize with the African American student community because we share a history marked by discrimination, oppression, and hatred of our people. Our University must take all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism, seriously through recognition and action. We support and will work alongside our African American peers to end discrimination and racism on this campus, something that we as Jewish students unfortunately understand all too well.

We therefore encourage the UI Board of Trustees and larger Urbana-Champaign campus to again take swift action to address the current needs of the African American student community. All minority student communities must be respected on campus, and this respect starts at the top with action taken by institutional leadership. This is a critical time for all minority student communities—especially the African American student community—that begs the University to develop and implement an intensive action plan as well as increase resources for the Office of Minority Student Affairs.

Sincerely,

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