

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On November 3 the Syracuse University Community Says Enough! Hundreds of Students, Faculty & Staff Rally for Diversity & Transparency

When: Monday, November 3, 2 - 4:30 p.m.

Where: Hendricks Chapel

Who: A movement of Students, Faculty, Staff & Community Members fighting for diversity & transparency in the campus community

For More Information: Yanira Rodríguez 315 744 0329; yrodrigu@syr.edu

OR Colton Jones [2156883237](tel:2156883237) cajonesj@syr.edu

Website: <http://thegeneralbody.org>

On November 3, starting at 2 p.m. Syracuse University students will gather at the steps of Hendricks Chapel to once again raise their voices in unison to say enough! to the current administration's attacks on diversity, inclusion, transparency, and the basic principles of democracy that inform a fair and just education. There will be music and other artistic performances to kick off the rally. The speaker line-up comprises students and faculty discussing ongoing protests on campus and will include the services of two American sign-language interpreters.

Syracuse University students have formed *The General Body SU* a student led coalition in response to the restructuring of the university that is being implemented by the administration under its current chancellor, Kent Syverud. His strategic plan known as Fast Forward Syracuse has so far resulted in the closure of a center that provided crucial advocacy services to sexual assault survivors, the cutting of programs for students of color, slashing department and program budgets, the reduction of the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) and the end of Multicultural Spring, which recruited both low income and students of color.

"We are having this rally now in advance of the November Board of Trustees meeting in which they will be voting on new Vision and Mission Statements for SU. This was pushed forward very quickly, without proper widespread input, and the new statements deliberately remove the terms "the public good," "access to opportunity" and "diverse backgrounds," said Becca Shaw Glaser, Creative Writing MFA '15. "It is no secret that the new administration seeks to be less involved with the wider Syracuse community, and to give fewer scholarships for those in financial need, and instead offer more merit-based scholarships, which tend to go to wealthier students. In fact, Chancellor Syverud's record on diversity is abysmal. He is the former Dean of the law school at Washington University in St. Louis, which, according to a September 23 *Inside Higher Ed* article, 'admits the lowest percentage of low-income students of any college of its kind in America.'"

This is the fourth rally at the university since September as the chancellor continued to be a no show at the listening meetings he scheduled for students to voice their concerns. Instead, the chancellor has set up surveys, forums and has tasked both faculty and students in work groups to come up with solutions to the issues that arose in the wake of his closed-door, unilateral, top down decision-making process.

“It is so important to understand that the lack of administrative transparency and inclusion is deeply connected to the lack of support for marginalized students at SU” said Farrell Greenwald Brenner, an undergraduate in Women's & Gender Studies and Citizenship & Civic Engagement, '17.

“We need a university that respects its students every step of the way. When the Board of Trustees voted against divestment from fossil fuels (even after it was passed by an overwhelming majority in both the University Senate and the Student Association) in a closed-door decision, that was part and parcel of the same system that allows discrimination to occur in the classroom,” said Brenner.

“That senior administrators have not gone through CARE or SPSS (diversity trainings available at SU) is demonstrative of a misunderstanding of the student body, and only furthers the lack of safety faced by students of color, queer students, and students with disabilities. This movement permeates every corner of this campus; we can no longer ignore the needs of the students if we are to move forward, as this administration apparently would like.”

Tired of waiting for a commitment from the chancellor to take concerted action in addressing major areas of concern, students have drafted a grievances and demands document they will be presenting to the administration.

"We've sat through enough listening meetings after decisions have been made. We don't need to feel included, we need to be included, and that means the Chancellor and Trustees actually taking action on student needs," said Benjamin Kuebrich, PhD candidate in the Composition and Cultural Rhetoric Program.