

August 17, 2020

CUPE 3906 Endorses an Actionable Plan for McMaster University to Tackle Anti-Blackness and Other Forms of Racism

Recommendation:

That McMaster University approves the actionable plan outlined below for tackling anti-Blackness and other forms of racism on campus.

Background: Spurred by the letter the University published on June 1, 2020, condemning anti-Black racism and expressing solidarity with Black community members, CUPE 3906 endorses the following action plan for McMaster University to take, in its pledge to expand services and initiatives to further support Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) students, faculty, and staff, with ongoing consultation from student organizations. In a time of heightened violence directed toward BIPOC communities by police and racist organizations, McMaster University must act from its position as a leading institution of higher learning in the struggle against institutional racism.

Particularly important is action item #5, calling for the termination of the contract of De Caire. De Caire's policing approach has been condemned by the Ontario Human Rights Commission as "textbook" **racial profiling**, criticizing his support of **carding** and **street checks**. As reported by the CBC, **72.1%** of sworn officers in the police union opposed the extension of De Caire's contract. Furthermore, many Hamiltonians on and off campus – particularly BIPOC community members – have called for his resignation since his hiring. Two petitions have circulated online, calling for the firing of De Caire, garnering almost **16,000 signatures** together. Meanwhile, the **McMaster Student Union (MSU)** General Assembly passed motions for the termination of his contract in **2016** and on **June 14, 2020**. On the latter date, it also called for the removal of all **Special Constables**, severance of ties with Hamilton and Halton **police services**, and to commit to not hiring **private security services**.

By adopting this plan, McMaster University commits itself to these 11 actions:

1. Specifying its language of solidarity, beginning with immediate and public support for **Black Lives Matter**. As the leading human rights organization in exposing police brutality, racial profiling, and denouncing anti-Black racism, publicly supporting Black Lives Matter is a clear first step in the struggle against white supremacy.
2. Specifying its condemnation of **white supremacy** and **anti-Black racism** in all its forms. Canadian universities have been complicit in allowing white supremacist values and organizations to hold public forum and expand their recruitment under the guise of "**free speech**." To provide a venue of truly safe and empowering learning with legitimate exercise of anti-racist pedagogy, McMaster University must be specific in denouncing groups that advance racist ideas.

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3. Providing substantive support in the form of **expanded financial assistance** and **scholarships** for **BIPOC students**. Beyond existing private endowments that may finance these scholarships, the University itself must stand behind progressive forms of financial support with internal University awards for BIPOC student researchers from all disciplines. Financial support is a direct action that leads to long-term benefits for students, communities, and the University.
4. Expanding access to **anti-racist pedagogical training** for all **student Teaching Assistants** and **faculty** to guarantee that classrooms are safely managed.
5. Terminating the contract of former Chief of Hamilton Police and current Director of Parking and Security Services, **Glenn De Caire**.
6. Collect demographic data of all stops, detainments and frisks that take place on campus.
7. Remove the Special Constables program by January 2021.
8. End its working relationship with Hamilton Police Services to ensure the safety and well-being of our community, including those who have been made most vulnerable.
9. Divert its investments from the Special Constables program and redirect investment to racially and culturally diverse mental health support, harm reduction programs, food & housing security for students, survivor-centric resources, and a re-imagined safety plan for the McMaster community.
10. Establish a working group with campus and community members to work towards a reimagined safety plan.
11. Commit to not hiring private security services.

Signed,



Nathan Todd,

President, CUPE 3906

On Behalf of the General Membership of CUPE 3906