STATEMENT BY THE UNC YOUNG DEMOCRATS EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board of UNC Young Democrats would like to extend our congratulations to Nikole Hannah-Jones on her tenure appointment to UNC Chapel Hill. Hannah-Jones' journalistic experience and exemplary work on the 1619 Project, which led to her earning a Pulitzer Prize and MacArthur Fellowship, make her undoubtedly qualified for tenure, and we are glad the UNC Board of Trustees recognized that on Wednesday.

However, Hannah-Jones qualifications should never have been questioned. That they were is another glaring example of the hyper-politicization of public education in our state and emboldened racism. Once again, conservatives in our state politics chose to uplift their white supremacist agenda by means of censorship, blatant discrimination, and prioritizing whoever can write them the biggest check. It is an embarrassment to this state, our education system, and those that have dedicated their careers to studying the history of this country. Wednesday's vote does not change that. Should Hannah-Jones choose to come to UNC, this university will benefit from her remarkable investigative research and her ability to teach us uncomfortable truths about ourselves.

During the Board of Trustees meeting to further discuss Hannah-Jones' tenure, students were forcibly removed from the meeting after the board failed to communicate meeting procedure. In an unnecessary show of force, Black students were removed from the space without explanation as to why a closed session was necessary. This is unacceptable behavior from those meant to prioritize student safety. Granting tenure to

Hannah-Jones does not erase the abuse of power shown on Wednesday, nor does it right this university's long history of exploiting the work of black community members.

We would also like to highlight the Board of Trustees members that continued to deny Hannah-Jones her deserved tenure: John Preyer, Allie Ray McCullen, Dave Boliek and Haywood Cochrane. These members have no business making decisions on behalf of students and faculty here at UNC as they have demonstrated their utter lack of value for progress, academia, and inclusion. At an institution that claims to pride itself for groundbreaking education, these members' titles are a joke. We would like to remind everyone that their presence on the UNC Board of Trustees is a result of the NC State Legislature Republicans' many attempts to hold our state and its public school system hostage to their wants over students' needs.

This university system has consistently shown that they do not value the voices of Black students, Black faculty, Black academics, and Black history. We stand in solidarity with Hannah-Jones and UNC's Black students and faculty, and urge everyone to center their voices. Hannah-Jones would not have received tenure without the relentless efforts of the UNC Black Student Movement, UNC Black Caucus, or UNC Student Body President Lamar Richards. Richards is the sole student on the UNC Board of Trustees, and he is who petitioned for Wednesday's meeting. We admire his unfailing leadership during this demoralizing time. Please support the UNC Black Student Movement and UNC Black Caucus by following their social media and contributing financially if you are able. We have included links to follow and donate to UNC Black Student Movement and UNC Black Caucus below this statement.

UNC Black Student Movement: [Website](#) - [Instagram](#) - [Twitter](#) - [Donate](#)

UNC Black Caucus: [Website](#) - [Instagram](#) - [Twitter](#) - [Donate](#)

Nikole Hannah-Jones: [Preorder The 1619 Project](#)

Uncyoungdemocrats.org | uncyoungdemocrats@gmail.com | facebook.com/uncyd | twitter: @uncyoungdems

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