



Cornell University Employee Assembly

Cornell University Employee Assembly

Agenda for April 6th, 2022

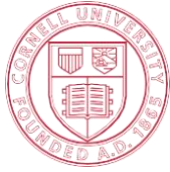
12:15-1:30

Join Zoom Meeting:

“An Active Voice for Cornell Staff”

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Roll Call
 - b. Land Acknowledgment of the Gayogo̱ho:ñoꞏ (Cayuga Nation)
- II. Approval of the March 16th minutes
- III. Business of the Day—
 - a. Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards University Hearing and Review Panel - Christina Liang and Karen Vicks
 - b. EA R4: Support for Faculty Senate Proposed Resolution: Inclusion and Prioritization of a New Natatorium in the “To Do the Greatest Good” Capital Campaign - Kristine Mahoney and Ashleigh Newman
 - c. Elections Update
- IV. Committee Reports
 - a. Communications, Outreach, and Recognition Committee
 - b. Education Committee
 - c. Liaison reports (CPC, UA, etc)
- V. New Business
 - a. Open discussion
- VI. Adjournment

We strive to make all events accessible. If you are in need of accommodations in order to fully participate, please contact the Office of the Assemblies at (607) 255-3715 or assembly@cornell.edu.



Cornell University Employee Assembly

Cornell Employee Assembly Minutes of the March 16th, 2022 Meeting 12:15-1:30 PM Zoom

I. Call to Order

- a. In place of Chair J. Withers, A. Haenlin-Mott called the meeting to order at 12:15pm.

II. Roll Call

Members Present [24]: M. Benda, M. Brooks, J. Chandler, M. Cherry, J. Creque, H. Depew, J. Duong, B. Fisher, B. Goodell, A. Haenlin-Mott, D. Howell, K. LoParco, K. Mahoney, E. Miller, S. Resue, A. Schafft, J. Stewart, K. Supron, K. Tannenbaum, J. Townley

Members Absent [4]: D. Barrett, J. Cannella, S. Coil, A. Durant, B. Fortenberry, A. Mittman, J. Withers, L. Zacharias

III. Land Acknowledgement of the Gayogoho:nq (Cayuga Nation)

- a. A. Haenlin-Mott stated the Land Acknowledgement.

IV. Approval of the March 16th, 2022 Minutes

- a. Motion to approve the March 16th, 2022 minutes was **approved** unanimously.

V. Business of the Day

- a. Office of Community Relations Spring 2022 Community Report - Kate Supron
 - 1. K. Supron introduced herself as the Campus Community Liaison for the Office of Community Relations which works on fostering relations between the university and the community. K. Supron noted that the Office of Community Relations has a website and noted the existence of a document called CR101 which outlines tasks that the Office does, including a list of boards and working groups that the Office respectively sits on or works with.
 - 2. K. Supron stated that she has been with the Office for around 5 years, and that certain data points for the Community Report such as student and visitor spending and payroll are typically drawn from the Ithaca campus, but that other data points respectively encompass Tompkins County and surrounding areas. K. Supron noted the reports evolution, starting from a thick pamphlet to eventually becoming the one-pager it is now. K. Supron noted that rather than displaying raw numbers, the Office began focusing on impact values, which are much more arduous to calculate but much more informative and meaningful.
 - 3. K. Supron noted that in the past fiscal year of 2021, student spending did rise, but visitor spending decreased by 99% from the previous year due to many scaled back events due to the constrictions of COVID-19. K. Supron stated that there

were \$6.5 million dollars spent on contributions to local public transit and school systems. K. Supron also noted that Cornell does pay property taxes on taxable properties, being the third largest taxpayer in Tompkins County, and that the amount of tax spending reflects both Cornell and Cornell-associated properties.

4. K. Supron stated that, while Cornell does own its own water system, it still pays municipal fees. K. Supron noted the large spending on research funding and stated that the spending pales in comparison to the amount of research money comes into Cornell in comparison. K. Supron finally noted the last two data points in the local economic snapshot, which she stated were the business incubators' revenues.
5. K. Supron acknowledged the procedure through which the snapshot is developed from the time that the fiscal year initially ends, noting that at the time of the report's release the data is about six months old. K. Supron stated that key audiences for the report include, for Cornell, the Albany and DC Offices, the Center for Regional and Economic Advancement, the Assemblies, and the Communicators Network, and for external audiences, the Chamber of Commerce, non-profits, municipalities, and other U.S. college towns. K. Supron acknowledged the value of the report, particularly it's short length and status as a straightforward and reliable resource.
6. B. Goodell questioned if, adding the value of the report together, the statistics total to around 1.5 billion dollars, to which K. Supron agreed. B. Goodell questioned the value if this was a regular year, to which K. Supron stated that the major statistic that was different was visitor spending, but that other spending points increased due to projects such as the North Campus construction sites.
7. K. Supron shared that Cornell conducted 1.15 million COVID-19 tests and reserved 100,000 hotel nights paid for in local hotels that also helped the local economy but weren't reflected in the report.
8. B. Goodell noted the work that Cornell has done for charitable organizations and questioned if this was reflected in the report. K. Supron stated that some of those contributions are reflected in the data, such as contributions to non-profit organizations, though the United Way campaign is not reflected in the report.
9. A. Schafft wondered who ranked in front of Cornell for property taxes in Tompkins County. K. Supron stated that one of the two is a developer, but she isn't entirely sure. B. Goodell stated that NYSEG and Dominion Resources were the top two taxpayers.
10. K. Tannenbaum questioned if the statistic on 100,000 hotel nights that Cornell paid for included stays at the Statler hotel. K. Supron stated that the 100,000 value only included off-campus private hotels.
11. A. Haenlin-Mott questioned if Ithaca College also produces a similar report that could be compared to. K. Supron stated that Ithaca College doesn't, and that creating this sort of report is rare in higher education.
12. J. Sumpter questioned if the statistic on employee salaries covers all faculty, staff, and student employees. K. Supron stated that the statistic only covers full-time employees and only reflects those working at the Ithaca campus.

13. A. Haenlin-Mott thanked K. Supron for her presentation.
- b. CARE Fund Update - Marcy Benda and Kristine Mahoney
 1. K. Mahoney stated that she and M. Benda are co-chairs of the CARE Fund fundraising committee, and that they are more broadly working with HR to review the CARE Fund's application process and awards.
 2. M. Benda stated that there is a group who keeps track of metrics concerning the CARE Fund website, and that whenever she or K. Mahoney present to groups on the CARE Fund the website receives massive spikes in interest. M. Benda noted multiple events taking place such as a raffle basket to help promote the Fund.
 3. K. Mahoney stated that the CARE Fund is operating on a donation pool of about \$40,000 reoccurring donations a year, which seems sustainable. K. Mahoney stated that they have been working with those in HR such as Michelle Artibee to review the criteria and award amounts of the fund, noting that the award amounts have not been re-adjusted for over 10 years. K. Mahoney stated that they are also looking to initiate an engagement campaign with the faculty to encourage full faculty participation.
 4. K. Supron if one could begin to donate to the CARE Fund at any time through Workday, or if it may only be decided annually. K. Mahoney stated that one can choose to donate at any time.
 5. A. Haenlin-Mott thanked K. Mahoney and M. Benda for their presentation and highlighted the importance of their work.

VI. Committee Reports

- a. Executive Committee - Andrea Haenlin-Mott
 1. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that the Executive Committee has been working to figure out the rest of the EA term and finalize guests in meetings. A. Haenlin-Mott noted the monthly meeting the Executive Committee has with Mary Opperman to discuss matters such as the 2022 Award for Staff Integrity and Inclusion, elections, and a farewell forum for her to answer final questions that will hopefully be in June.
- b. Communications, Outreach, and Recognition Committee - Ellen Miller
 1. E. Miller stated that the Committee has a communications subcommittee working with the Office of the Assemblies on projects to better the Employee Assembly website, though temporarily paused as they work with the IT team to outline what the scope of the project will be.
 2. E. Miller stated that for outreach, the Cornell Recreation Connection is planning some events during the student's Spring Break such as bowling and ice skating and will figure out how Employee Assembly will get involved.
 3. E. Miller stated that for awards and recognition, there has been a winner selected for the Staff Award for Integrity and Inclusion that will not yet be released for a surprise celebration for the awardee. E. Miller stated that nominations for the George Peter Award have been launched live.
- c. Benefits and Policy Committee - Brian Goodell

1. B. Goodell stated that the Committee met on the 8th and discussed Cornell parental leave, the whistleblower protection policy, and Cornell children's tuition scholarship fund. B. Goodell noted that, should anyone have any issues, he would love to discuss them at the next Committee meeting.
- d. Employee Welfare Committee - Kristine Mahoney
 1. K. Mahoney stated that the Committee met right before the current Employee Assembly meeting to discuss revisions of the employee onboarding resolution, a resolution that will probably return to the full body in April. K. Mahoney stated that the committee is considering developing a resolution in support of the Faculty Senate and University Assembly resolutions. K. Mahoney stated that discussion on respecting boundaries and developing guidances to do so also happened. K. Mahoney stated that the Committee participated in a discussion with the University Managers Working Group where return to work and work situations were discussed, as well as the question of support for hybrid or remote employees.
- e. Education Committee - Marcy Benda
 1. M. Benda stated that the Committee has been asked to volunteer time for the Staff Graduate Reception on May 24th. M. Benda noted discussion at the previous Committee meeting on support for employees with disabilities and a possible resolution towards EDP supervisory restrictions that would remove some obstacles to obtaining an EDP or continuing education. M. Benda stated that the Faculty Senate is developing a proposal for a part-time online program to grant bachelor's degrees for non-traditional students, and that the Committee is considering creating a resolution to support this proposal.
- f. Elections Committee - Marin Cherry
 1. M. Cherry stated that the Committee met and have confirmed election rules and a calendar, also noting that due to the presence of the Employee-Elected Trustee election that is happening concurrently, the Committee has decided to mimic this calendar so that both elections may have increased awareness and promotions together. M. Cherry stated that the Committee will look to meet soon to continue making decisions.

VII. New Business

- a. Open Discussion
 1. B. Goodell questioned if there were considerations on having the Employee Assembly meeting format be in-person again, given the new mandates released by the University. A. Haenlin-Mott stated that there was discussion on this topic, and that the thought was to finish out the term on a Zoom format. A. Haenlin-Mott noted that typically, the Employee Assembly would physically meet in room 401 of the Physical Sciences Building.
 2. J. Creque questioned if there was knowledge or concerns on the restructuring of six or seven units. J. Creque clarified that when the pandemic first began, leadership made cost-saving efforts to restructure some units such as HR and IT, which has led to some concerns and misunderstandings.
 3. E. Miller stated that for her in the research division, there were multiple

resignations in the adjacent business center due to some not being interested in transferring to a centralized unit, which caused lots of difficulties due to these openings. E. Miller noted that for many workers, there was a lack of variety from this sort of centralization that they didn't want.

4. B. Goodell stated that he received concerns from correspondents stating their worries for the future due to the changes implemented.
5. J. Creque stated that she was considering the creation of a resolution asking for broader information on leadership's plans for these changes so that people may have resources to become more informed and address their questions.
6. K. Mahoney stated that, as a manager of the fabrication shop, there were problems with the machines that needed to be addressed by CIT, an emergency ticket that was not addressed for over four hours. K. Mahoney stated concerns with the centralization process and questioned if the process was genuinely helping different units.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. M. Benda motioned to adjourn. K. Supron seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Office of the Assemblies

Cornell University Employee Assembly

E.A. Resolution #4

Support for Faculty Senate Proposed Resolution: Inclusion and Prioritization of a New Natatorium in the ‘To Do the Greatest Good’ Capital Campaign

February 22, 2022

Sponsored by: Kristine Mahoney, EA, Chair, EA Welfare Committee; Brandon Fortenberry, EA/UA, Chair; Debra Howell, EA/UA, Chair, Campus Welfare Committee; Ruth Merle-Doyle, Cornell Wellness

Whereas, the University Assembly endorses the [Faculty Senate Proposed Resolution: Inclusion and Prioritization of a New Natatorium in the ‘To Do the Greatest Good’ Capital Campaign](#), included here as an Addendum to this resolution, and

Whereas, the F.S. Proposed Resolution outlines specific background on the current situation and that context which remains unsatisfactory, and

Whereas, the needs of the Cornell community for universal access to free and accessible, indoor recreation, sporting event facilities, and exercise facilities are not being satisfied, and

Whereas, some faculty, staff, students, are no longer able to participate in aquatic fitness at Cornell.

Whereas, the Employee Assembly is charged in Section 2 of the Charter to examine matters which involved the interests or concern the welfare of the non-academic employee community and confers that responsibility to the Employee Assembly Welfare Committee is charged in Section 3.4 of the By-laws.

Be it therefore resolved, the Employee Assembly aligns its support with the F.S. Proposed Resolution imploring the administration to include and prioritize a new natatorium to the list of fundraisings items donors may directly contribute to in Cornell University’s ‘Do the Greatest Good’ capital campaign for the benefit of the University and the community the University serves.

Be it further resolved that a new natatorium should be of sufficient size and quality to meet the current and future needs of the Cornell community. To help ensure this, the planning

33 needs to involve Cornell leaders with knowledge and expertise in this area including the
34 Directors of Athletics, Aquatics, Cornell Wellness, Physical Education, Recreational
35 Services, and Head Varsity Swimming Coaches.

36
37 **Be it finally resolved** that the president of Cornell University support the faculty, students and
38 staff communities and constituencies represented through the Employee Assembly by
39 advocating for the inclusion and prioritization of a new natatorium in the “Do the
40 Greatest Good” capital campaign. A copy of this resolution shall be shared with the
41 Provost and the Vice President for Alumni Affairs.

42
43
44 **No signature block is present until the resolution has been disposed of by the Assembly**
45 **(Passed, Failed, Withdrawn, etc.) Then a block with the certifying member (customarily**
46 **Chair/Vice-Chair) verifying the authenticity and vote tally of the resolution.**
47

Appendix A: Background

Background

This resolution arises from the imminent need for Cornell University to develop plans, fundraise, and construct a new natatorium. This resolution seeks to support the F.S. Proposed Resolution, sponsored by Faculty Senate senators Ashleigh Newman, Yuval Grossman, and at least 11 other faculty senators.

The Campus Welfare Committee (hereby, the Committee) is charged with ensuring that diversity and inclusion, family support, and health services for the Cornell student body, faculty, and staff is prioritized in both conversation and action. The F.S. Proposed Resolution advocates for the construction of a new natatorium to benefit the mental and physical health of the entire Cornell community. As such, the Committee is compelled to support the F.S. Proposed Resolution.

As outlined in the F.S. Proposed Resolution, swimming and access to water-based exercise have proven benefits for mental health. These benefits include increasing self-esteem among college students, combatting Seasonal Affective Disorder (common in climates similar to Cornell's), and potentially alleviating mental health concerns brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Indoor swimming facilities play a key role in providing access to free, indoor recreation and exercise options for students seeking to exercise their mental and physical well-being.

Unimpeded access to swimming facilities (meaning indoor swimming facilities, given Cornell's climate during most of the academic year) is also an equity concern. As outlined in THE F.S. Proposed Resolution, people of color make up the majority of enrolled students in beginning swimming classes offered at Cornell. Citing the Resolution, "students who have completed this course out of necessity report undergoing a transformative experience starting with reluctance, fear, and dread to one of immense pride and accomplishment when they learn how to swim and pass Cornell's swim test."

Additionally, the Committee has been made aware that, due to a limitation of access to the pools made in part to extend the lifespan of the existing pools, women's open swimming hours have been cut. Women's swim hours have historically provided a safe space for women to access swimming facilities, to network, and to build community at Cornell. The elimination of this program has been met with disappointment from the female aquatic community at Cornell.

As a result of decreased pool hours, unexpected pool closures, and an overall reduction in pool availability, the aquatic community and culture is being pushed out of Cornell. Specifically, many faculty, staff, and retirees are now swimming off campus (YMCA, Island Fitness, Borg Warner). In addition, the Cornell Varsity swimming and diving teams had to hold all home fall meets at Ithaca College, and the Cornell water polo team is only able to obtain one hour of practice time per week at Ithaca College. In an effort to attract and retain both academic and athletic talent, the offerings must improve.

In alignment with THE F.S. Proposed Resolution, the Committee recommends incorporating the construction of a natatorium at Cornell within the scope of the "Do the Greatest Good" campaign. To quote THE F.S. Proposed Resolution, "a modern natatorium is an eight-lane, 50-meter by 25-yard pool that is at minimum 9 feet deep, with 14-foot depth in the diving well (for 3-meter springboard diving)."

Appendix B: Faculty Senate Proposed Solution; Updated 2/21/22 to reflect changes in the F.S. Resolution

Proposed Resolution: Inclusion and Prioritization of a New Natatorium in the ‘To Do the Greatest Good’ Capital Campaign Faculty

Senator Co-sponsors:

Ashleigh Newman
Yuval Grossman
Carrie Adler
Doug Antczak
Alexandra Blackman
Elizabeth Bunting
Thomas Bjorkman
Abigail Cohn
Laura Goodman
Kelly Hume
Steven Jackson
Carolyn McDaniel
Thomas Overton
Itziar Rodriguez de Rivera
Tracy Stokol
Joe Wakshlag
David Zax

Committee Sponsor:

Faculty Advisory Committee on Athletics and Physical Education

Background:

This resolution arises from the imminent need for Cornell University to develop plans, fundraise, and construct a new natatorium.

Many Cornell community members utilize the aquatic facilities on Cornell’s campus including students, faculty (both current and Emeritus), and staff. It is estimated that over 600 students use Cornell’s pools from the following groups: varsity swimming and diving teams, physical education classes (beginner, intermediate, and conditioning swimming; diving, scuba diving, lifeguarding, synchronized swimming, and kayaking), swimming and water polo club teams, physical therapy, inner tube water polo intramural, naval reserve officer training corps (ROTC), and autonomous underwater vehicle club. In addition, in fiscal year 2018-2019, 1,875 students and 742 faculty, staff, and retirees swam during open swim offerings resulting in 23,987 total swims (43% of which were students, 57% non-students).¹ Cornell recreation services also offers Aqua Fit and Zumba classes.

Swimming and other water-based exercise have proven benefits for both physical and mental health, including an increase in self-esteem in college students.² In particular, swimming during

the winter has been shown to improve general well-being.³ This is relevant for the Cornell community, as many suffer from the winter blues and Seasonal Affective Disorder due to Ithaca’s long, cloudy winters.⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic has also resulted in an increase in depression symptoms⁵, bringing to the forefront the need to prioritize preventative measures that benefit mental health.⁶

While Cornell has three pools on campus [two in Teagle Hall (1951) and one in Helen Newman Hall (1963)], they are 71 and 59 years old, respectively, and no longer meet industry standards for a modern facility. Two are six-lane, 25-yard pools, and the third is a “learn to swim” fourlane, 20-yard pool, all with insufficient surrounding deck space. A modern natatorium is an eight-lane, 50-meter by 25 yard pool that is at minimum 9 feet deep, with 14 foot depth in the diving well (for 3-meter springboard diving). The main pool in Teagle Hall is the sole facility that can be used for swimming and diving competition, as Helen Newman lacks diving boards and swimming starting blocks, with undersized swimming lanes that are too narrow and shallow. Even at Teagle, the varied depth is not ideal for water polo play, and swimming and diving cannot occur concurrently, as the diving well is integrated into the 25-yard main pool footprint. The smaller pool in Teagle Hall is used for physical therapy, physical education classes, and aspects of varsity use (e.g., cooling down for meets), but cannot be used for competition, water polo play, or the underwater vehicle club, due to the truncated length and/or insufficient depth.

While Cornell’s current aquatic facilities have long been out-of-date and inferior to our Ivy League and many non-Ivy League peers (see Appendix 1), in recent years, there has been increased closures of the pools, including those of longer duration, due to unsafe water quality conditions and failed regular maintenance. A 2019 study of the pools concluded the pools do not meet current New York state standards for swimming pool turnover rates, contributing to the

¹ 2019 Summary on Cornell pool use.

² [Health Benefits of Water-based Exercise](#), Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Howley, EK. [4 Reasons Why Swimming is Great for Mental Health](#). *U.S. Masters Swimming*. January 6, 2021.

Zhang, Hui, Luo Shi. [Empirical Analysis of the Influence of Swimming Training on Mental Health and Positive Emotions of College Students](#). *Revista Argentina de Clinica Psicologica*; Buenos Aires. Vol 29, Issue 1, 2020: 242.

Muhamad, TA et al. [Effects of Swimming on Self-Esteem among Female College Students](#). *Asian Social Science*. Vol. 9 No. 16; 2013:74-80.

³ Huttunen P, et al. 2004. [Winter swimming improves general well-being](#). *Int J Circumpolar Health*, 63:2, 140-144.

⁴ Cornell Health. Beating the Winter Blues: [A Guide on Getting Through Winter at Cornell](#). October 2019.

⁵ Ettman, CK et al. [Prevalence of Depression Symptoms in US Adults Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). *JAMA Network Open*. September 2, 2020.

⁶ Lieber, M. [What regular swimming does for the body and mind](#). CNN health. July 16, 2021.

poor water quality.⁷ Decreased pool usage was recommended as one way to prolong the life of these facilities. As a result of this recommendation and the frequent, unexpected pool closures, there has been progressively reduced pool availability for all the stakeholders detailed above. This has been the source of increasing frustration for Cornell pool users, as publicized in the Cornell Daily Sun.⁸ In 2020, \$750,000 was invested in all three pools for new sand filters, repair of some plumbing, as well as structural shoring. The decision was made to use the less expensive

wooden beams, instead of steel, because the steel would last longer than the lifespan of the pools they were supporting. These improvements are expected to extend the life of the pool by approximately five years but are in no way a permanent solution to the aged facilities' problems. In addition, Teagle Hall needs a new roof, which is estimated to cost between ten and twelve million dollars and would require all occupants to vacate for at least a ten-month period, which comes with it additional relocation costs. A better investment of the University's money would be to put this towards the construction of a new natatorium. Cornell Facilities Management warns that the pools may fail at any time despite these recent palliative measures. No other college or university in Appendix 1 is without a functioning pool.

One consequence of no pool on campus would mean the termination of the beginning swimming class (PE 1100), in which people of color represented 89.7% of enrolled students from 2018 – 2020.⁹ Students who have completed this course out of necessity report undergoing a transformative experience starting with reluctance, fear, and dread to one of immense pride and accomplishment when they learn how to swim and pass Cornell's swim test (see Appendix 2).¹⁰ By having this requirement, Cornell University makes a statement that swimming is an important life skill that will help break the cycle of parents who do not know how to swim and therefore do not encourage their children to learn to swim.¹¹ In the United States, an average of 3,957 unintentional drowning deaths occurred each year from 2010-2019.¹² Drowning death rates for American Indian or Alaska Native and non-Hispanic Black persons are higher than that of White persons¹³, likely due to generational inequities in access. Implementing community-level interventions such as basic swimming instruction are encouraged as means to reduce racial disparities in drowning rates. Therefore, providing Cornell students access to pools and swimming instruction is a matter of diversity, equity, and inclusion importance, as well.

Even if all three existing pools were fully operational, they no longer meet the ever-expanding needs of the Cornell community. Due to the limited number of lanes and inability to have

⁷ Helen Newman and Teagle Halls Pool Study. 2019. Counsilman-Hunsaker Aquatics for Life.

⁸ Kempff, Brendan. [Cornell's Pool Problem Needs a Fresh Solution](#). Cornell Daily Sun. September 23, 2021.

⁹ Cornell University PE 1100 enrollment data. Fall 2018 – Spring 2020.

¹⁰ Jain, A. [A Changing Perspective of the Swim Test](#). Retracting a Former Column. Cornell Daily Sun. March 29, 2017.

¹² [Drowning facts](#), Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

¹³ Clemens T, et al. [Persistent Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Fatal Unintentional Drowning Rates Among Persons Aged](#)

¹¹ [History of the Cornell Swim Test](#).

[<29 years – United States, 1999-2019](#). MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2021;70:869-874.

multiple groups in a pool at one time, the pools are used up to 15.75 hours per day (6:00 am – 11:15 pm) to accommodate all stakeholders. Whereas at Ithaca College, for example, their 50meter pool can accommodate eighteen, 25-yard, lanes of swimming, *as well as* diving at the

221 same time. This maximizes the number of occupants in the facility at one time, allowing for
222 increased availability and at more ideal times of day.

223
224 In addition to the inadequate swimming pools, the programmatic changes over the life of the
225 facilities no longer provide sufficient and equitable use for visitors. When Teagle Hall was
226 originally constructed, it was built as a male-only athletic facility and the modifications for
227 female and transgender and gender non-conforming persons are inequitable and insufficient. In
228 2018, the University Assembly passed U.A. Resolution #12: Increasing Access to Gender
229 Neutral Bathrooms on Campus¹ to expand inclusion and comfort. The Student Assembly
230 similarly passed S.A. Resolution #21: Availability of Accessible Gender-Neutral Bathrooms and
231 Locker Rooms on Campus.² Although the current facilities have been either modified or are
232 being prioritized to meet this resolution, they will not be equitable in their distribution to all
233 parties due to design and structural limitations to the buildings. A new facility designed with
234 these programmatic requirements would be the most cost efficient and effective way to address
235 this University priority.

236
237 In April 2020, Cornell University published its Mental Health Review Final Report. It was stated
238 that Cornell has a “culture of competition [that] may take on an unhealthy cycle of expectation
239 and behavior that can reach traumatizing levels for students, faculty, and staff.”¹⁶ In examining
240 and exploring the ways to improve the mental health of the Cornell community, the report was
241 broken down into four sections: A) foster a healthy educational environment; B) promote social
242 connectedness, and resilience; C) increasing help-seeking behavior, and identifying people in
243 need of care; and D) provide mental and medical health services. In Section B under
244 Opportunities, it reads, “It is important to note that when asked for their recommendations,
245 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students consistently prioritized the need for access to
246 free physical fitness opportunities to cope with stress and build resilience. With Ithaca’s climate,
247 students want free and convenient indoor fitness options.” The report acknowledged “the
248 challenge that this presents given both financial and facility constraints.” Recommendation B.2.2
249 under Wellbeing reads, “Prioritize fundraising for free physical fitness under Affordability within
250 the capital campaign.” It is important to note that pool access is free to all Cornell students,
251 unlike other fitness centers on campus that require a paid Cornell Fitness Center membership.
252 Ideas such as “virtual fitness classes” and the use of “virtual and augmented

253
254 reality” were proposed in the report as alternatives to fitness centers on campus. There is no
255 virtual equivalent for aquatic activities, and these suggestions simply fail to meet the mental
256 health needs of Cornell’s students, as well as faculty and staff.

¹ Cornell University, University Assembly, U.A. Resolution # 12: Increasing Access to Gender Neutral Bathrooms on Campus, March 2018.
https://assembly.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/ua_resolution_12_gender_neutral_bathrooms_amended_as_of_04.10.18.pdf

² Cornell University, Student Assembly, S.A. Resolution #21: Availability of Accessible Gender-Neutral Bathrooms and Locker Rooms on Campus. <https://archive.assembly.cucloud.net/SA/20111103R21.html>

¹⁶ Cornell University Mental Health Review Final Report. April 2020.

In an email to the Cornell community on October 18, 2021, President Martha Pollack announced Cornell University’s new capital campaign project, “To Do the Greatest Good.” The campaign’s official website lays out the goal of raising at least \$5 billion over the next five years through the connections of at least 200,000 Cornellians.³ This campaign provides the rare opportunity to reach major donors across all of Cornell and finally raise the funds necessary to make this long overdue project a reality. A modern natatorium on par with our peers both in Ithaca and beyond, would do an enormous amount of good for Cornell and the broader Ithaca community benefitting physical and mental well-being. The fact that this need is not even listed as a university priority is disgraceful. The process of project approval, architectural planning, demolition, and construction is likely to take 7-10 years. If this process began today, this timeline is well beyond the estimated 5-year remaining lifespan of the pools. Our aged, failing facilities cannot wait.

The thought of a Cornell University with no functioning pool is unfathomable and unacceptable.

The Resolution:

Whereas, participation in physical, cultural, and social activities outside of one’s primary studies or work provides individuals with a sense of belonging at Cornell and enriches their overall wellbeing.

Whereas, the pools in Teagle Hall and Helen Newman Hall (further referred to as “the pools”) serve a large and diverse population of Cornell community members including students, faculty, and staff in endeavors including varsity athletics, physical education classes, aquatic-based physical therapy, clubs – both academic and athletic, open lap swimming, ROTC training, and group fitness classes.

Whereas, the pools no longer meet the needs of the Cornell community as detailed above, and have a finite lifespan, which are estimated to end at any time between now and 2025.

Whereas, approving, planning, fundraising, and building a new natatorium can take up to ten years. Cornell University faces the certain reality of having no operational pool on its campus.

Whereas, Cornell University has long valued swimming as an important life skill to prevent fatal unintentional drowning, as demonstrated by over 100 years of a graduation requirement for all undergraduate students to swim 75 yards or pass two semesters of beginning swimming (PE 1100).

Whereas, providing an inviting, modern, safe, and accessible environment for aquatic activities provides Cornell students, faculty, and staff the ability to exercise year-round, which is a proven positive contributor to mental health.

³ 17 <https://greatestgood.cornell.edu/>

Whereas, recommendation B.2.2 of the Cornell University Mental Health Review Final Report reads, “Prioritize fundraising for free physical fitness under Affordability within the capital campaign.”

Whereas, we recognize there are many needs of the University, it would be in the University’s best interest to serve those that are of the most imminent need to its community.

Be it resolved, that the Faculty Senate implore the administration to include and prioritize a new natatorium to the list of fundraisings items donors may directly contribute to in Cornell University’s ‘To Do the Greatest Good’ capital campaign.

Be it further resolved, that a new natatorium should be of sufficient size and quality to meet the current and future needs of the Cornell community. To help ensure this, the planning needs to involve Cornell leaders with knowledge and expertise in this area including the Directors of Athletics, Aquatics, Physical Education, Recreational Services, and Head Varsity Swimming Coaches.

Faculty Co-Sponsors

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