

Cornell University Employee Assembly

E.A. Resolution #2

Advocating an Inclusive Rebranding

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3 Sponsored by: B.J. Siasoco

4 **Whereas,** In 2004 Leaders at Cornell Plantations questioned the appropriateness of the name
5 “Cornell Plantations” and whether a different, more descriptive name was needed; and

6 **Whereas,** In 2009 and 2010 Plantations went through a rebranding process in an effort to better
7 define themselves, working with outside firm Lipman Hearne, to develop marketing tag lines that
8 captured the essence of experiences at Plantations and to redesign their logo to try and visually
9 depict what and who they are more clearly; and

10 **Whereas,** In 2014, Dr. Christopher Dunn started as the E. N. Wilds Director of Cornell Plantations
11 and was tasked by Dean Kathryn Boor to take an in-depth look at Plantations, their mission and
12 vision, and to see if it should be adapted to inform modern needs. She noted that one possible result
13 of this examination is the Plantations that we know today could end up looking somewhat different
14 in the future and that prospective changes could include rebranding; and

15 **Whereas,** From April 2014 through April 2015, Dr. Dunn met with Plantations’ staff, the advisory
16 council, university leadership, CALS leadership, and other community stakeholders to better
17 understand Plantations’ brand within the College and greater University context; and

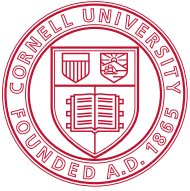
18 **Whereas,** In October of 2015 Cornell Plantations began a strategic planning process and hired
19 Beacon Associates to lead them through the process; and

20 **Whereas,** In November of 2015, Black Students United provided the Cornell University
21 administration a list of demands that they felt needed immediate addressing, which included the
22 changing of the name of the Cornell Plantations; and

23 **Whereas,** In December of 2015 Beacon held a series of focus groups amongst Plantations brand
24 fans both on the Ithaca campus and in New York City and conducted a follow-up survey to better
25 understand how they related to the mission, the vision and brand, which showed that 70-75% of
26 respondents felt the name Cornell Plantations did not fit with who they are, and what they actually
27 do; and

28 **Be it therefore resolved,** that the Employee Assembly encourages the Board of Trustees to include
29 the proposed name change of Cornell Plantations on their October 2016 board meeting agenda.

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31 **Be it finally resolved,** that the Employee Assembly encourages the Board of Trustees to approve
32 the proposed name change to “Cornell Botanic Gardens”, so that Cornell’s botanic gardens,
33 arboretum and natural areas may better represent what they do, and reach broader audiences.
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Cornell University
Employee Assembly

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36 **Respectfully Submitted,**

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38 *B.J. Siasoco*

39 Executive Vice Chair, Employee Assembly