



Rensselaer

Assistant Vice President for Student Life
Dean of Students

September 20, 2017

Justin R. Etzine, 152nd Grand Marshal
Matthew C. Rand, 128th President of the Union
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rensselaer Student Union, Student Government Suite
110 8th Street
Troy, NY 12180

Dear Justin and Matthew:

Subject: Clarification on the hiring of the Director of the Union Position

As you know, the position of the Director of the Union serves an important role in providing support to and advocacy for the Rensselaer student community, working diligently with the Student Senate and Union Executive Board in doing so. Over the past several days there have been communications detailing the authority under which this position is to be filled, calling to question the process. I write this letter to provide clarity and assurance that the student voice is necessary.

It is critical to understand that there is no conflict between the authority of the institute and that of the Union in this matter. It is required by law that the Institute maintain a hiring and continuance process governed by the administration to ensure that federal, state and local laws and other requirements which protect workers are being fulfilled. As you have made clear, you understand the role that the Division of Human Resources plays in the process, as well as that of the Administration. As is true when considering any position that works with students, the President requires substantial student involvement in the decision making process.

In this particular case, the input of the Union Executive Board is formalized by a vote. It is inconceivable that a decision would be made in opposition to the voice of the students when a vote is in full accordance with both *the Bylaws of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute*, the *Rensselaer Union Constitution*, and all applicable employment protection laws. The same would be true when making a decision to discontinue the services of an individual in the position, unless the individual engaged in an act so egregious it required immediate separation.

The Rensselaer Student Union is one of the last student run unions in the country, a point of great Rensselaer pride that we will continue to support and lift up as a model of superior student leadership development and excellence in community engagement. We must now refocus on how we continue a positive forward oriented process to hire the next successful director of the Union. I am looking forward to working with you to ensure our continued collaborative working relationship based on support for the student experience, integrity in our interactions and deeds, and love for Rensselaer.

We look forward to the Union Executive Board vote and additional input collected through the search process.

Sincerely,

Travis T. Apgar
Assistant Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students

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