



UNDERGRADUATE EXECUTIVE BRANCH
STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Undergraduate Executive Branch The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 2018-2019 Putnam Administration

Dear Carolina Community,

Last night, a group of students and community organizers did what few were prepared to do: they corrected a moral and historical wrong that needed to be righted if we were ever to move forward as a University. Last night, they tore down Silent Sam. They were right to do so.

Over a century ago, Silent Sam was erected on the basis of bigotry and white supremacy, and it has perpetuated hate and violence ever since. For too long, we have avoided reconciling our University's past transgressions against black and brown individuals. Time and time again, it has been the courageous leadership of our peers of color that has shaken this University from its complacency and guided us all toward our better lights. Through their organizing and protests, long days of advocacy and late night meetings, these leaders have dedicated themselves to the daily work of change. For your courage and resilience, we thank you, and we stand with you.

Like any moment of change, these days are filled with precarity. Whether you're a seasoned student activist or just starting your first day of classes, it's okay to be frightened and it's okay to be confused. We are too. But, as Carolina students, we have an obligation to take care of each other and to act in the face of uncertainty. Together, we will push through adversity, strife, and resistance to ensure that the monument and the hatred it fostered remain toppled forever.

In the coming days, the nation will turn its eyes toward Chapel Hill. The removal of Silent Sam has placed our University at the center of a long overdue conversation about justice and reconciliation. Our actions as UNC students will determine on which side of history our campus falls. We, as student leaders, find ourselves looking to the ideals that brought us to Carolina in the first place—those of light and liberty—that every student should feel welcomed, valued, and heard. We've failed in that, we must do better, and we make that commitment to you now.

Yesterday was a great day to be a Tar Heel. By working together, tomorrow will be too.

Hark the Sound,

Undergraduate Executive Branch Officers