

Dear Chairperson Donnelly, President Johnson, and Provost Herbert:

I am writing to express my sincere, and severe, concern, in light of recent actions taken by the John Carroll University Board of Directors and its Administration. As a double alum, and a former staff member, who deeply loves John Carroll University, its faculty, staff, and students, I am appalled by the unethical and blatant disrespect, and disregard, for the livelihoods and careers of my mentors, my teachers, my colleagues, and yes, my friends. It takes a serious level of audacity to threaten faculty members with the loss of their tenured status; a status that was not simply bestowed upon them when they began their academic careers, and to do it during a once in a lifetime pandemic, while the institution currently sits on a sizable endowment. Does it seem particularly antithetical to the mission of John Carroll University, and the philosophy of Jesuit education, to make so many educators fear losing their jobs, and their healthcare, at a time when the entire world is suffering from a dangerous and ruthless virus that has killed hundreds of thousands of people, and has additionally hospitalized thousands? It certainly seems antithetical to me. Because I was taught to be a man for, and with, others.

It is my understanding that what you are trying to do, stripping away the tenure protections of tenured faculty members, can only be done when the institution declares itself to be in "financial exigency." I have also been told that, as an institution, John Carroll University does not meet the necessary criteria to declare a state of financial exigency. So, instead, you have decided to exploit a worldwide crisis, a global pandemic, in order to conduct what is essentially a power grab. To create a "new rule," in which tenured faculty can be fired, at any time for any reason, simply due to your definition of "financial hardship," and with no legal recourse or mechanism for appeal. This power grab would allow you to fulfill your agenda of controlling which tenured faculty get to stay at John Carroll University, and which do not. Without declaring financial exigency, and publicly expressing a severe institutional crisis, you do not seem to have the authority to take the actions you have taken.

Perhaps you need to be reminded of the fact that tenure is earned. It is something that faculty members work tirelessly, for years, to earn! As a former administrative assistant to an academic department, I have seen firsthand what it takes to earn tenure. It requires hours and hours of work, compiling hundreds, and sometimes, thousands of pages, that demonstrate the progress, and accomplishments, of each faculty member who applies for

it. Not to mention the hours of teaching, conducting research, producing publications, presenting at academic conferences, advising students, and serving the University on numerous Committees and Councils, or as members of Administration. Tenure is an achievement, and a goal, that faculty truly work for a lifetime to reach.

Sadly, your decisions represent an Administration that must not care very much about the JCU community, its faculty, or its current students and alumni. Again, as a double alum, a former staff member, and a brother who has two younger sisters that attended John Carroll, I fear for the future of my alma mater. Your actions have created headlines that do damage, not just to the reputation of the institution and its faculty, but to the alumni who have earned degrees from John Carroll University, and the students currently studying to earn their degrees. To see the institution, and its faculty, be so disrespectfully disregarded by an Administration charged with educating an institution's youth, with producing men and women for, and with, others, makes me incredibly angry and very sad.

I owe my career to the education I received at JCU, and I am proud to have earned two degrees from John Carroll University. My diplomas may be signed by the president of the institution, and the chairperson of the Board of Directors, but they did not educate me. It is the faculty that educated me, first and foremost. And they deserve better. They deserve respect. They deserve to keep what they have worked so hard to earn. Though I doubt you will read this email, or will care much for what I say, I remain hopeful that you will reverse course and fully reinstate the protections of tenured faculty at John Carroll University. And if you do not, it is also my hope that my wonderful and dedicated teachers will succeed in challenging your decision. I end by saying sadly that I, and many other alumni, will choose not to support John Carroll University, as long as it moves in its current direction. Your actions do not reflect the John Carroll University we know and we love.

Sincerely,
John A. Ambrose '15, '20G