

**NYU**Martin Luther King, Jr.
Scholars Program

As scholars in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholars Program, we are writing and signing this letter in support of the ongoing graduate student workers strike and their efforts to secure just working conditions.

This letter was neither endorsed nor rejected by the current administrative team in charge of the program and/or administration at large, and was circulated among the MLK Scholars student body.

We write to you both as students enrolled throughout the undergraduate divisions of the University and as advocates committed to the empowerment of marginalized communities at NYU and beyond. The Scholars Program is said to “support [King’s] vision of the ‘beloved community’, a world free of racism, poverty, violence, and war.” We are left, then, with solely one reasonable option — to stand alongside our friends, peers, and allies in education as they ask NYU for the bare minimum:

A living wage. Free and expanded healthcare. Protections for international and immigrant students. A police-free campus. Safeguards against harassment and abuse.

These proposals are not too much to ask for. As the [GSOC Contract Demands](#) note, “All our workers are students and no student should have to go into debt to get an education.” There can be no doubt to this end. Students matter — and as with all people, students deserve to live free from the stress of making enough to put food on the table, care for their families, and sustain living in New York City, while all under the threat of police violence. This is especially true of the students that serve us daily to ensure the growth and wellness of this community, and NYU’s refusal to do better speaks much louder than their words. We are, as scholars, cognizant of the systemic discrimination at institutions like ours; we know the pain and pressure to survive under such conditions, which the global pandemic only exacerbates. We see the struggles grad workers face as a consequence of NYU’s institutional failure to support its students and build a welcoming learning environment for all. To stand idly by as graduate student workers — those that are critical to the operations of NYU as a whole — face such a burden would be a failure on our part and an unacceptable reaction from a group tasked by the University to build a community of care.

To all reading this, join us. GSOC resources are available [here](#). If you are an MLK Scholar, please [fill out this form](#) to sign. To all students, MLK Scholars included, sign the GSOC pledge as an individual [here](#).

We believe in a just society. We are proud to add our names to the long list of those in NYU’s history who have demanded that the University act to uphold the same, even as we acknowledge that the fight does not end here. Meeting the basic needs of graduate student workers is just one step in the right direction — and we hope that the University takes it, for the sake of administrators, faculty, and students alike.

In solidarity,
The MLK Scholars

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Signatories:

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