



President's Office

Manhattan College  
Riverdale  
New York, N.Y. 10471

January 24, 2011

Dear Colleagues:

In my letter to the community of January 13, I wrote that the College was considering its options with regard to an appeal of the recent unfavorable decision by the NLRB. You will remember that in that opinion, the Acting Regional Director of the NLRB purports to deny Manhattan College's status as a Catholic institution.

After careful review of the government's decision I, along with the Board of Trustees, have decided that we cannot let this decision go uncontested, and so today we formally appealed the Acting Regional Director's ruling to the National Labor Relations Board in Washington, D.C. The brief requesting review, which lays out our position in great detail, will be available on the College's website, together with related information. I urge everyone in our community to read it.

Our decision is based on our conclusion that the ruling is full of errors in fact, in reasoning, and in law; that its understanding of what constitutes a Catholic College is grounded in misperception rather than genuine knowledge of the College and of the history and present circumstances of Catholic Higher Education in America; and that its characterization of the College's efforts to sustain its mission is not only inaccurate but offensive. Letting such a ruling stand, therefore, would be a betrayal of generations of people, Christian Brothers and lay colleagues, alumni, students, and family, who established, built, and continue to support and maintain this proud institution. Indeed, we believe the Acting Regional Director of the NLRB, in his analysis of the College's Catholic mission and identity, engaged in just the kind of intrusive and illegitimate investigation that the courts prohibit.

Let me emphasize again, that the stand we are taking is a stand *for* the College as a whole, and not a stand *against* our adjunct faculty. In fact, I have had many notes, emails, and personal conversations with members of our adjunct faculty who have told me that they strongly support the College's position. We firmly believe that, given the opportunity, we can adequately address the special needs of our adjunct faculty as part of our overall pursuit of excellence throughout the College.

The decision made by the Region of the NLRB directs that an election be held among the adjunct faculty immediately. We have asked that the election be stayed until the outcome of the appeal is known but we are not sure whether that request will be granted. We have also requested that the NLRB allow the adjunct faculty adequate time to discuss the issue of the union election once the semester begins and not hold an election immediately at the start of classes. We are waiting for a decision on the proposed date of the election. The NLRB already has required the College to turn over the names and home addresses of all adjunct faculty, which it will give to the Union, so that the Union may contact adjunct faculty at their homes.

In the weeks ahead, we will have many opportunities to share thoughts and opinions on these issues. I welcome these conversations. And I am confident that they will be conducted collegially with respect for each others' opinions, and always mindful of the greater good of the institution and our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brennan O'Donnell". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Brennan O'Donnell, Ph.D.

President