Mills announces free tuition for low-income students starting fall 2024

By BRUNA HORVATH
Deputy News Editor

Low-income students will no longer have to pay tuition at NYU starting in the fall 2024 semester, according to an announcement made by university president Lin-da Mills at her inauguration on Oct. 17. The change will only apply to incoming students who live in households earning annual incomes of $80,000 or less.

The ceremony, which took place at the Paulson Center, cemented Mills as the 7th president of NYU, the first to be a woman. Mills succeeds former president Andrew Hamilton, who attended the event alongside university’s 15th president, John Sexton.

“I couldn’t be more excited,” Hamilton said in an email with WSN.

“There have been 16 presidents before Linda and each one of us builds on the achievements of the predecessor. I had the great fortune of following John. I know, with great joy, that Linda will build on the achievements of her predecessors and NYU will be in good hands.”

Hamilton announced he would step down from his role as presi-dent in August 2022.

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How
Stuart Robinson’s misconduct went overlooked for years

By ANIA KEENAN
Features Editor

Content warning: This article discusses sexual and verbal harassment.

In 2013, NYU’s former athletics director, Stuart Robinson, wrote an email to a colleague at the State University of New York, New Pal-tz. “So I’m happy with WSN I would think, there’s the read. For employees of the athletics departments at NYU and New Paltz, incidents like this became too common under Robinson’s tenure.

For three years, Robinson al-legedly harassed multiple athletics employees of the athletics departments at NYU and New Paltz, incidents like this became too common under Robinson’s tenure.

Approximately 75% of students and faculty said they prefer Violets over Bobcats when asked which mascot they preferred as the school’s repre-sentative in a WSU survey. Of 2023 articles mirroring then-sophomore Steve Stanzak had been living in Bobst, shavingver at firefighters’ apartments and nearby gyms. On his personal blog and in an interview with WSU, Stanzak attributed his multi-month stay in the library to the high cost of housing and limited financial aid at the university.

“One of the reasons it gained a lot of traction was because it was such a quintessential NU story — one that really captured essentially the struggles of being in New York City, at NU, and not having a real campus,” Chang said of the coverage, which was published just before his time at the paper. After the story broke, larger publications such as

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Celebrating 50 years of the Washington Square News

By NAISHA ROY
Deputy Managing Editor

2023 marks a half century of NYU’s independent student newspaper.

Here’s a look into what’s happened between its start and now.

If you walk into the basement of NYU’s Third Avenue North resi-dence hall on a Sunday afternoon you’ll be greeted by what may seem like utter chaos: furious typing at every desk, a cow bell ringing to signal conference room meetings and the murmuring of editors trying to perfect their stories for the day. This organized chaos makes up the Washington Square News, but there’s a lot behind this day-to-day communion.

WSN was founded in 1973, the year that NYU sold its Universi-ty Heights campus in the Bronx and merged with the Washington Square campus most students know today. The student newspapers of each campus — “The Heights Daily News” and the “Washington Square Journal” — combined to make the university’s first daily paper, which still publishes today. Originally called “Washington Square Daily News,” WSN dropped the “Daily” from its name before 1976.

This year, NYU’s paper celebrates in 50-year anniversary.

New beginnings

Volume one, edition one of WSN printed on Thursday, Sept. 20, 1973. The paper promised to hold the university accountable not only for its impact on incoming students, but also for those already paying tuition. An article introducing the paper titled “New Morning” headed the edition’s second page.

“One of the things necessary in this approach to reporting the news is a redefinition of the relationship between the student and the univer-sity,” the article reads. “No longer can the student be looked upon as one who willingly surrenders himself to the school in return for the knowl-edge he receives from it.”

Since then, WSN’s stories have done exactly that, with many themes from its 2023 articles mirroring those featured in its 1973 edition. Headlines from the first paper in-clude “Loans: Tighter than ever” and “Inflation: Our fight for free tuition has begun.”

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Violets victorious as NYU’s mascot, WSU survey finds

By KRISH DEV and MAISIE ZIPPEL

Violets or Bobcats? It’s a dilemma that has plagued the minds of NYU students for decades.

According to an email to the university’s daily survey in Bobst Library, 367 said they preferred Violets as NYU’s mascot, while 132 chose the Bobcats. One student could not decide between the two. Sophomore Brielle Karolak said she preferred the “Violets” as the university’s mascot because of its familiarity.

“I feel like Violets is used more of-ten than ‘Bobcats’, so that’s just what I’m used to,” Karolak said.

According to the university’s fac-ulty handbook, the Violet mascot stems from the colors of the uni-forms NYU athletes have worn for over a century, although the origin of the university color itself is debat-ed. Following a brief period when a student drew up an illustration of a violet flower at sports events, NYU decided Vio-lets “did not instill great awe or fore-boding in NYU’s opponents.”

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The New York Times and the BBC quickly wrote about it too. NYU eventually provided Staten with free on-campus housing in Lafayette Hall for the rest of the semester. In November 2008, then-editor-in-chief Adam Playford and reporter Marc Beja investigated crime statistics at NYU. In a multi-part investigation, they found that the university underreported substance abuse incidents on campus. They reported that NYU utilized a campus map that only included three residence halls, and claimed the others were considered to be off campus. The university was thereby able to boast a comparatively small number of on-campus crimes.

“They had said there were like two instances of any drug on campus in years and years,” Beja said. “I spoke to some experts and they were like, ‘NYU’s totally fudging this’.”

In 2008, the series won a national award for in-depth reporting from the Society of Professional Journalists, one of the nation’s best-known journalism organizations.

“I recall the university being kind of receptive, and when we sat down with the vice president of public safety, they were like, ‘Oh, gee, is that really how we do this? Well, no, that’s not how we do that. It sounds wrong to us,’ ” Playford said.

Russell Beerman, who was WSN’s editor-in-chief in the fall of 2003 and is now the paper’s editorial advisor, helped edit coverage of a string of suicides, that took place at NYU, some inside Bobst Library, between 2003 and 2005. As a result, the university installed aluminum guardrails, which still exist, on each floor as a preventative measure. This addition and its history was revisited in a 2022 feature piece.

“It was a very difficult news story to cover, because it was a tragedy when somebody takes their own life and in such a way,” Beerman said. “But it might have been a lot about how to cover those stories in a way that’s both responsible and sensitive.”

Entering a digital world

In 2000, WSN launched its website. The newspaper maintained both a print and online edition for 20 years, but it went fully digital during the pandemic.

“This shift was not as simple as it sounds, though. As Chang explained, what ensued was a complete re-prioritization of how daily production took place.

“The timing of having to get a certain number of stories published and ready every single day drove a lot of the WSN workflow,” Chang said. “We didn’t focus enough on the shift to digital because a lot of times we would get to the end of the night and send off the paper and then a harmful of us would as fast as possible try to post the stories online.”

The first version of the website was a simple black-and-white interface. It listed several stories and had a small menu on the side, linking to the paper’s different sections. Over the next few years, the website introduced color, images and advertisements, expanding to include online—only stories and longer features.

As the website grew, the print edition of the paper quickly lost readers’ interest. According to Chang, advertisers started to prefer digital ads over print ones, and students picked up physical editions of the paper less frequently.

Beja recalled the newspaper’s re-action when it stopped publishing its Friday print edition, in 2008. “I wrote the story when we dropped the Friday edition—people were mad about it internally, and I was like, ‘Hey, guys, we have to write this,”’ he said. “We’ve been a daily print paper for years. People were really upset.”

During the pandemic, the paper’s daily production was forced to go fully virtual. When writers returned to WSN in 2021, Chang pushed to drop the print edition altogether, and the main focus became the website.

Sasha Cohen, the paper’s arts editor during the 2020-21 academic year, remembered experimenting with the digital design of the paper’s arts issue when the paper’s staff was moved online.

“How could we reinvent the way in which we’re presenting content?,” she asked. “Something we were really fascinated by was mixed media, finding this intertwining between digital images and illustration.”

Today, WSN’s website looks vastly different. Its red—and black color scheme is apparent across the page, and covers images accompany every story. Users can navigate hundreds of pages, sections and subsections, all with just a few clicks.

The walkout and the return

Running a daily campus newspaper isn’t always the easiest task, and the newspaper faced one of its biggest obstacles in the fall of 2020. Cole Stallone, the editor-in-chief at the time, was fired without warning and a new adviser, Kenna Griffin, was brought in without full disclosure of her powers and responsibilities over the newspaper.

Issues quickly arose with Griffin’s behavior toward staff members, as well as the level of independence WSN had from the university.

Disagreements with the adviser reached a breaking point on Sept. 28, 2020, when nearly the entire editorial staff resigned. For roughly a whole semester, NYU didn’t have its student paper.

People’s individual feelings on the issue, and their hurt and they were offended by certain words and actions,” said Manasa Gudavalli, who staff, they were hurt and they were offended by certain words and actions.”

Almost all of the friends that I still keep in touch with from my days at NYU, nearly 20 years later, are people that I met and became friends with while working at WSN,” Beja said.

“A lot of these people are people that I know 20 years down the line, I will still be in touch with,” Gudavalli said. “And I think that’s a really sweet thought.”

Contact Naisha Roy at nroy@nyunews.com.
Linda Mills inaugurated as new university president

Starting in the fall 2024 semester, students in households that make less than $100,000 will not have to pay tuition at NYU.

During her speech, Mills also revealed that the university’s prison education program, which provides incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students with free college courses, will now allow students to complete bachelor's degrees.

"The wisdom is in the room right here right now," Mills said. "We need to build on this internal and untapped imagination to develop our capacity and do what NYU does best, seize the future."

The announcement will help alleviate the economic burdens many students face while attending NYU.

"Part of why I came to NYU as an undergrad was I felt it represented something inclusive," de Blasio said in an interview with WSN. "Often the greatest form of exclusion is economic and the idea that now families of more modest means can know their child is getting an education. This is the kind of thing you dream about when you think about how to make fundamental change."

Evan Chesler, the recently appointed chair of the university's board of trustees, said that he thinks Mills' announcement will expand academic opportunities for low-income students.

"Our story is all about access, giving students an education that they might not otherwise have received — that's what I got from this university," Chesler said in an interview with WSN. "Everything that President Mills is focused on is giving access to a world class education for students who might not otherwise get it."

Toward the end of the ceremony, around 40 students and faculty gathered outside of Paulson to protest recent changes to adjunct professors' course assignments. Other on-campus unions, including Contract Faculty United, which represents contract faculty at NYU, and ACT-UAW Local 7902, which represents part-time faculty at the university, held signs outside of the building.

Since February, the contract faculty union has been demanding recognition from NYU, asking for fair collective bargaining with the administration, the assurance of due process for faculty terminations and the implementation of annual raises that match inflation rates. The adjunct union has also recently become unhappy with the university's administration. On Sept. 19, members of ACT-UAW Local 7902 wrote an open letter to Mills, garnering over 2,000 signatures. In the letter, the union demanded that NYU restore any jobs adjuncts lost this year to what the university has said were pandemic-related enrollment and budget changes.

In an email interview with WSN in March, Mills said she believes that all employees of NYU, regardless of union status, should be "treated with dignity" and that the university's goal in bargaining efforts is to come to an agreement that respects and honors the contributions of these employees.

Stephen Rechner, the president of the union of clerical, administrative and technical staff at NYU, said adequate benefits for university workers are a necessity for employees to be able to continue to work there.

"We have to be able to afford to live in this city," Rechner said. "We’re here to talk to Linda Mills today directly and tell her that workers need to be paid, workers deserve a good contract that protects their benefits and their wages and their working conditions, so that NYU is a place where people can stay."

The university did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the rally.

Maisie Zipfel contributed reporting.

Contact Iniana Horvath at horvath@nyunews.com.

University President Linda Mills delivers a speech at her inauguration at the Paulson Center on Tuesday, Oct. 17. (Manasa Gudavalli / WSN)

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NYU Global Programs

New York University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.
shadow on the park and destroy whatever aesthetic appeal Washing- 
lon's Smith said. "Residents in Washington Square Village claimed the monument would obstruct views of the park."

The same year that Robst was built, the university made the decision to sell its undergraduate campus in the Flaxon, which it had opened in 1894, due to financial hardship. The space, which NYU already owned due to a land purchase in the 1910s, was acquired by Ibero Community College.

In 1964, as this growth in Washington Square Village began, the university made an important strategic decision: to transform NYU from a good regional institution into a world-class institution through selective, top national research un-

Haddad had written about the Village's journey, from a mass burial ground in the late 1800s to a haven of political protest and an open space to a space for offices, factories and boarding houses occupied by Bo- 

"Washington Square regained its former glory, but unlike the 1960s, when the two superblocks directly addressed the Village, today, NYU's vision for Washington Square Village is more of an open space for offices, factories and boarding houses occupied by Bo-

As a result, the '70s saw Wash-

A supermarket, the Village's first co-op supermarket, opened in the late 1960s. The store was located on Bleecker Street and LaGuardia Place, situated on a property owned by the University of the Village Community Board.

"I met with some resistance from community members, and they told me that the university didn't have any more plans for the area," said NYU's former President John Sexton. "But I think there was a sense that the university was going to have to do something to accommodate the needs of the community."

The supermarket opened in 1970, and it was immediately successful. "People were so happy to have a supermarket in the Village," said Avi Kaner, the owner and operator of the Village's first co-op supermarket.

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Continued from page 1

How Stuart Robinson’s misconduct went overlooked for years

This account is based on interviews with over a dozen current and former employees and students from athletics departments at both universities and a review of legal documents, email correspondence and text messages. A majority of people that WSN spoke to for this story asked to remain anonymous out of concern for their privacy and job security.

A Title IX lawsuit at SUNY New Paltz

Driving back from a conference, Elizabeth Student felt trapped and scared, but not surprised when her boss, Stuart Robinson — then athletics director at New Paltz — insisted that she and a colleague play a game of “fuck, kill, marry” by sorting their colleagues into the prescribed categories. This was the first time she had faced harassment from Robinson, according to a 2018 Title IX lawsuit Student filed against the State University of New York and SUNY New Paltz.

New Paltz chose to protect the abuser rather than their staff and students.

NYU either ignored Robinson’s past or was too lazy to do the proper hiring diligence to protect NYU from Robinson.

— A former coach at SUNY New Paltz

In the lawsuit, Student said Robinson also made remarks about her appearance: “Your husband would also make remarks about your husband, wouldn’t he?” In April of 2016, Student, Robinson and a group of her colleagues were attending a conference. Student told WSN that she planned to visit New Paltz that summer. Student said she planned to do the proper hiring diligence to protect Student from Robinson, “Call for a good time.”

Robinson allotted unequal resources to their staff and students. This was a consensus among the student-athletes, as was the fact that sexually harassing behaviors were normalized and condoned within the department.

Robinson’s misconduct reportedly continued in his career at NYU. The university has maintained that it was not aware of Robinson’s history when it hired him as athletics director.

The university has told WSN that it used a search firm to conduct a background check on Robinson during the hiring process, which it said included looking into candidates’ criminal and criminal legal histories. NYU said this did not reveal Student’s case, which was public.

The university gave Robinson’s leave of absence, but Student decided to sue NYU after she was never offered any additional paid sick time. Student decided to sue NYU after she was never offered any additional paid sick time.

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The university would allegedly share the content of reports with Robinson.

When complaints of sexual harassment, inappropriate behavior or gender discrimination involving Robinson would arrive at Huck’s office, he allegedly minimized employees’ concerns.

People close to the department said Huck would remark that employees should “just stick it up” or “work harder” and say that “Stuart can do whatever he wants.”

Huck also allegedly shared the contents of reports with Robinson — sources close to the department have described how raising a complaint could lead to weeks of “being shushed” by Robinson. They also said staff were concerned about the risks of being on Robinson’s bad side, worried that it might impact their athletics or their job security.

When asked for comment at his office, Huck told WSN that “we don’t discuss our personnel matters.” Huck also said he was unable to contact Huck via email and phone call.

As more people left, the department allegedly struggled to function. Coaches would arrive to practices or games and realize that their equipment was missing, or that transportation to practice events went uncoordinated, leaving coaches to scramble for ways to get to athletes' games.

When Robinson was fired, he did not offer an apology, at least not to WSN.
Welcome, Alumni & Families!

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Letter from the Editor

It is with great pleasure and immense pride that I write to you today to commemorate a significant milestone in our publication’s history. 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of the Washington Square News — 50 years of relentless dedication to independent reporting, to informed discourse, to training the next generation of journalists.

Our five-decade journey is a testament to our unwavering commitment to the pursuit of truth in a dynamic world, both on and off campus. While independent, rigorous, student-run journalism is often a tryng pursuit, bearing witness to the challenges and triumphs that have shaped the NYU community is both a responsibility and a privilege. It is a task that generations of WSN staff have been honored to undertake.

As the editor-in-chief, I can say that we are all honored to share this remarkable moment with you. Moreover, we are thrilled to mark the occasion with a special print edition of the Washington Square News.

WSN is consistently recognized as one of the country’s leading college newspapers for its excellence in digital journalism. But there remains a power to the print newspaper that seems increasingly pitted against truth, the printed word retains in power to inform, educate and inspire.

From breaking-news coverage to in-depth investigations; from thought-provoking opinion pieces to interviews with up-and-coming artists — the breadth and depth of WSN’s coverage embodies the complexity of the world that NYU students are learning to navigate.

We keep the campus informed. We shape its discourse. We encourage critical thinking, nurture diverse perspectives, cultivate robust discussion. We tell the stories that matter to our diverse community, and we ask the questions that they deserve to know the answers to.

And it is not only the readers who benefit. Our publication serves as a platform for students to immerse themselves in real-world journalistic practice. Here, they refine their writing skills and develop their instincts as they train in the principles of objective reporting, fact-checking and journalistic ethics.

At WSN, student journalists reckon with their preconceptions and do the messy work of sifting through the complexity of the world that NYU students are emerging into. Here, they explore a wide range of topics, engage with diverse perspectives, and confront the challenges of seeking out and conveying truth. This practice builds on the NYU education as they work to become societal custodians of fact.

The concept of truth itself is as under threat as it ever has been. In politics, deception, falsehood and straight-up lies threaten our society’s democratic foundations. In the media, mistruths and equivocations — real and perceived — have earned the press distrust in the eyes of many.

Now, the endeavor of earning and maintaining the public trust through the defense of fact lies ahead. Truth will need a new generation of student journalists.

Student journalism plays an irreplaceable role in developing the defenders of a free and democratic society. It is in these pages that the next generation of journalists will find their voices, develop their professional identities, and emerge as informed and responsible contributors to the global discourse.

However, like many publications, we find ourselves facing financial challenges. The transition to digital journalism. But there remains a power to the print newspaper that seems increasingly pitted against truth, the printed word retains in power to inform, educate and inspire.

As we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we invite our loyal readers, alumni and friends to stand with us. Your support will ensure that we can keep the tradition of independent journalism alive and thriving on our campus.

In the spirit of this anniversary, we encourage you to reflect on the impression of student journalists. The Sarah Raybin Portlock Fund was established in 2006. She was not only an accomplished journalist, but she also mentored and championed young journalists throughout her career, starting at WSN. Sarah championed student journalism as a way to inform the campus community and to provide the space and support students need to develop into thoughtful, rigorous journalists. The past and future of WSN strive to maintain the longevity of our publication and facilitate a sustainable environment for our student journalists. Your donations help us continue to provide a platform for the stories that need to be told and the facts that need to be heard — at NYU and beyond.

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As the editor-in-chief, I can say that we are all honored to share this remarkable moment with you. Moreover, we are thrilled to mark the occasion with a special print edition of the Washington Square News.

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