

The purpose of this article is to bring awareness to the consistent irresponsible activities that continue to take place within our Board of Trustees, more specifically our Board Chairman, Mr. Joe Bell. It has come to the attention of the Shaw University student body that the, Chairman of the Board, Mr. Joe Bell has given students from his hometown of Savannah Georgia, full scholarships for many years. These students GPA's range from 1.8 to 3.3. In addition to their scholarships, they have also received two to three thousands dollar stipends for their personal expenses. Sharad Johnson Feels it is unfair that every year these students are allowed to attend Shaw University without paying anything, while other students have to find part time jobs, take a number of loans to supplement their financial aid to attend Shaw. Every year a number of students have to return home because they do not have enough financial aid to pay for their tuition and their parents do not qualify for some of the loans that are available. It is terribly unfair that our tuition is used to finance the education of these students from Savannah. For many years these special privileged students have attended this university on the backs of hardworking parents and students who struggle to meet their financial obligations to Shaw. This information was very disturbing to the student body, so I set out to interview and find answers as to why for so many years, have our Board of Trustees has tolerated such immoral and irresponsible behavior from its chairman, Mr. Joe Bell. After diligently researching this oddity, below is a description of our findings.

After interviewing Brenton Logan, Sharad Johnson and Stephany Smith I learned that the Trustee scholarship replaced the Presidential Scholarship which had academic guidelines and standards. Today the Trustee scholarship is also known to the students as the "Joe Bell" scholarship. It is called that because he is the only Trustee member that consistently give this scholarships to students. Joe Bell, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, has provided a full four-year scholarship to any student from his hometown of Savannah, Georgia who chooses to attend Shaw University. These students are allowed to attend Shaw University free of charge for four years or more, until they obtain an undergraduate degree. Upon further inquiry, we learned that all information about the Joe Bell scholarship is kept confidential, even from some Board of Trustees members. When speaking with the personnel who manages all scholarships, Brenton Logan further uncovered the fact that these personnel member who are responsible for scholarship are no longer aware of the qualifications and requirements for the scholarship. Some staff members stated they were uncertain of the GPA requirements because Mr. Bell had reduced the standards considerably in order to accommodate some of his students. All Trustee scholarships requirements are set by Mr. Joe Bell. He has assigned no staff member to monitor the academic progress of these students because there are no academic standards required. Equally as important, is the

enormous amount of money that Shaw University loses each year by allowing these students to attend free of charge. Admission records indicate that there are approximately 43 students who are currently enrolled at Shaw University from Savannah Georgia and none of them are paying. That is over a million dollars that Shaw will lose. Being that Shaw University is a tuition driven institution, the tuition charges for these students to attend will come from the tuition of those hard working students who have to pay.

Needless to say, Mr. Bell is the chairman of the same board who failed to hire a president after supposedly conducting a year-long search. The media reported that money and time were irresponsibly spent by hiring an unqualified individual to head the search committee. This ultimately resulted in the recommendation of an unqualified candidate. Ironically, both the unsuccessful presidential candidate and the inexperienced and incompetent search firm leader just happened to be from Savannah Georgia, which is the hometown of the Board of Trustees Chairman, Joe Bell. It does not make any sense to the student body that the other members of the board took no action to reprimand or dismiss him for misleading you about the fraudulent qualifications of the search firm leader and manipulating the search process. Rather than being reprimanded, you allowed him to continue as Chairman and to lead and to control the second and present search. This second presidential search by all indications and talk among students is worse than the first search. It lacks transparency, honesty and openness.

The students of Shaw University firmly request that Chairman Joe Bell be removed from the Board of Trustees immediately. They are asking that he be removed on the grounds of his abuse of powers and the continued exploitation of Shaw University. The students most importantly feel Mr. Bell should be removed for his selfish nature and lack of sensitivity and concern for Shaw University's financial woes. Students have also stated that all Trustee or Joe Bell scholarships be terminated and that all students be personally responsible for paying their own tuition to attend Shaw University. Brenton Logan and other student activist further recommend that all future presidential searches be transparent and open to student, faculty, staff, and involve the alumni.