FROM THE FRONT

"The red and golden leaves start falling down"
WHEN FALL COMES TO NEW ENGLAND CHERYL WHEELER

Committee comes after Cornell suit sparked reckoning

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misconduct. The survey findings were used to analyze areas where Yale could improve, she said.

"The idea of having this committee in place is that we are regularly and in an ongoing way learning and benefiting from what we learn from each survey, analyzing the work we do, in order to ensure that we are constantly improving," she said.

McInnis noted that there have "been moments when we have, as a nation, talked about this issue," and described the current moment as "absolutely" one such instance.

"You can't open many media outlets without a conversation about it," she said. "As horrible as this situation is, it provides us an opportunity to have attention on our work so that we can ensure that we are doing everything to support students on this campus and to do everything that we can in order to prevent these circumstances in the first place."

On Wednesday, McInnis also addressed statistics from Yale Public Safety's most recent Campus Crime Report — an account of crime statistics and safety policies required annually by the Clery Act. Of cases reported in 2025, Yale recorded more rapes than all other Ivy League schools and more than most Connecticut colleges, CT Insider reported on Saturday.

Duane Lovello, the head of Yale Public Safety, told CT Insider that Yale "maintains robust training and awareness programs for students, faculty and staff on preventing or responding to discrimination, harassment and misconduct, and engages with students, faculty and staff on a regular basis to raise awareness of the many reporting tools and support services available to the Yale community."

In response to the crime statistics, McInnis drew a distinction between the procedures of the Clery report and Yale's climate survey.

"We believe that our climate survey is more accurate methodologically," she said.

McInnis added that an increased tendency to report crime — when "a campus community is more aware of the resources for reporting and is more comfortable availing themselves of those resources and engaging in the processes" — may impact statistics.

At a Family Weekend event on Saturday, McInnis spoke publicly for the first time about sexual assault support resources after the Cornell lawsuit was filed and stated that she had "asked for another review" of Yale's systems. She said on Wednesday that she had been referring to the standing advisory committee formed this semester.

Yale released its first Sexual Climate Survey in 2015.

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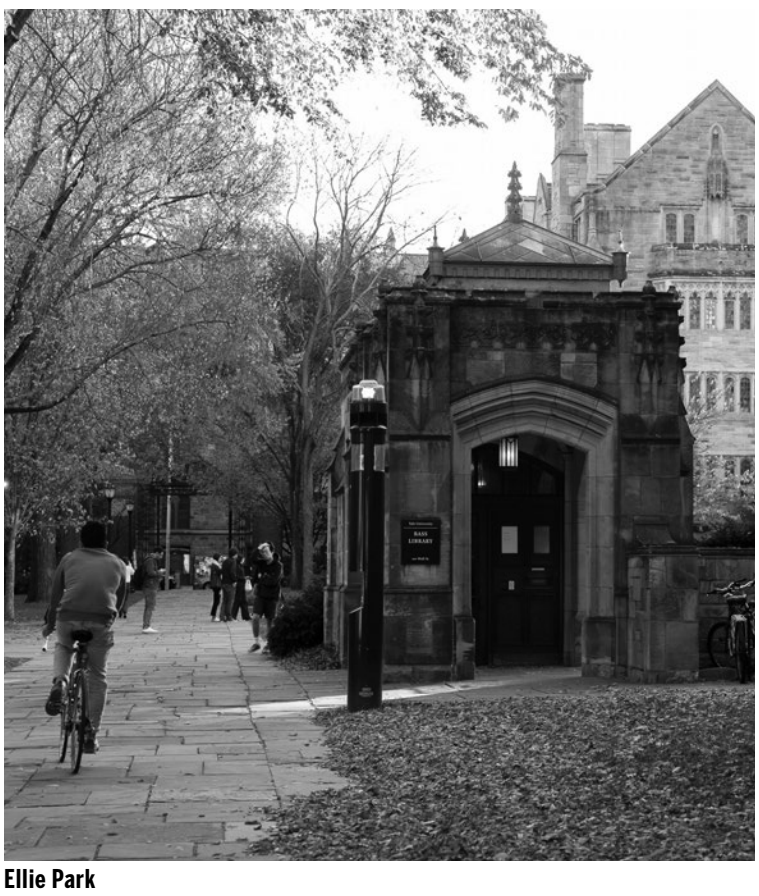
Garrett Curtis / Photography Editor
The standing committee, whose members have not yet been finalized but will include University faculty and staff, aims to improve Yale's work to educate about and lower instances of campus sexual misconduct, McInnis said in a Wednesday interview.



Ellie Park
In a hot-mic moment on Saturday, University President Maurie McInnis said "trustees are exhausting." In a Monday statement on behalf of the board of trustees, senior trustee Marta Tellado GRD '02 affirmed "full confidence" in McInnis.

McInnis said trustees were 'exhausting'

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mitted to working together for the Yale community."

Other trustees did not respond to individual requests for comment.

McInnis said in a Sunday statement to the News provided by University spokesperson Karen Peart that she "very much" regrets her remarks to Lewis.

"My words did not reflect how I've spent the last two years meeting with students, faculty, staff, and alumni to hear their ideas, concerns, and aspirations for our university," McInnis said. "Nor were my words reflective of my deep gratitude for our trustees, alumni volunteers who give so much of their time and energy to help strengthen this institution."

After telling Lewis that "trustees are exhausting," McInnis made an apparent jab at one former trustee.

"Although it will be better without Josh, I can already tell," she said.

There are two former trustees named Joshua whose terms concluded in recent years. Joshua Bekenstein '80, a former co-chair of Bain Capital, was a successor trustee from 2013 to 2025 and a senior trustee from 2021 to 2025. Joshua Steiner '87, an investment firm partner and former Treasury Department chief of staff in the Clinton administration, was a successor trustee from 2018 to 2026. Successor trustees typically serve for up to two six-year terms, according to the University by-laws.

Bekenstein and Steiner did not respond to requests for comment.

The trustees play a significant role in selecting the University's president, filling eight out of the 12 seats of the presidential search committee. Both Bekenstein and Steiner were on the presidential search committee that selected McInnis.

Tellado said in her statement that in meetings throughout the past two years, "President McInnis has consistently shared the perspectives that she has heard in her many conversations with students, faculty, staff, and alumni."

"The board dedicates much time to understanding the concerns and aspirations of the Yale community," Tellado said. "As such, our meetings with the president and others are thorough, and the meetings are very full."

The board of trustees appointed Tellado to succeed Bekenstein as senior trustee in 2025.

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First on-campus rally since 2024

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Inside the Presidents' Room of the Schwarzman Center on Wednesday evening was University President Maurie McInnis, who was attending a Women Faculty Forum ceremony that started at 4:30 p.m. and ended around 6:00 p.m.

As the crowd flooded the plaza, Bob Proto, president of Local 35, addressed the group and posed a question to McInnis: "Is this what you want this campus to look like?"

The union represents around 300,000 workers in the United States and Canada and has four local unions headquartered in New Haven: Local 217, which represents hospitality workers, Local 34, which represents Yale's clerical and technical workers, Local 35 which represents Yale's service and maintenance staff and Local 33, which represents the University's graduate students and postdoctoral researchers.

"We need raises that keep up with inflation," Dunn said. "We need to make sure our medical stays affordable, and we need a retirement that we can rely on."

At Wednesday's rally, hundreds of protesters held up signs saying "Three contracts, one union," while chanting "What do we want? Contracts! When do we want it? Now! If we don't get it? Shut it down!"

"In 2026, workers cannot keep up. It's hard to make ends meet," Gwen Mills, the International Union President of UNITE HERE, said.

Takerra Williams, a Schwarzman Center employee and a Local 35 member, spoke to the crowd and described the financial pressures she faces. As a single mother, she said, she struggles to pay for rent, food, gas and child care while raising her daughter.

"I live paycheck to paycheck," she said. "I am constantly faced with the difficult decision of prioritizing which bills are most urgent and needs to be paid first."

Another worker, Stacia Bowers, echoed Williams' concern. As a medical school employee, she said, she decided to attend the rally to fight for higher wages, affordable housing, health care and job security.

"We need better wages because with the economy right now things are kind of difficult," Bowers said. "The University owes us that because we do work for it."

According to Proto, negotiations with Yale have been underway for about 14 months. Proto criticized the University's approach to wages and health insurance.

"The University doesn't seem to be taking our wage proposal seriously, and they presently want to pass on the cost of healthcare to our members in increased premiums," he said. "We've been at the table, and if Yale applied itself, we could probably settle the contract in two days."

Yale's Office of Public Affairs & Communications said in a Thursday statement that the University "looks forward to reaching a fair agreement that meets the needs of all parties."

"These Yale staff members contribute in vital ways to the university's mission of research and education, and to the work of Yale School of Medicine and Yale Medicine in providing compassionate clinical care and improving the health of our community," the office added.

The University's unions last went on strike in 2003. Proto said that recently, University leadership has not been "prioritizing" its employees.

Mayor Justin Elicker, who was present at the rally, said in an interview that Yale workers should earn enough to support themselves and their families comfortably.

"It's not just about Yale employees, but it's about New Haven residents having a middle-class lifestyle," Elicker said.

The Rev. Scott Marks — the director of New Haven Rising and a UNITE HERE employee — specifically criticized Yale's spending on artificial intelligence.

"The University sitting on the $44 billion endowment cannot claim poverty," he said to the crowd. "They are spending $150 million on AI, while real workers are out here struggling to afford groceries, rent and health care."

Throughout the rally, various speakers and representatives emphasized that the workers on Yale's campus who fulfill a variety of roles make it possible for the University to thrive.

"We work at one of the wealthiest and most prestigious universities in the world, and the work that we do — the teaching work, the research, the clerical and technical, the facilities and maintenance, the food service work — that is the work that makes Yale work," Local 33 President Adam Waters GRD '21 '26 said.

Other speakers at the rally included John Wilhelm '67, a founder of Local 34 and a former president of UNITE HERE and Lisa Stevens, the Local 34 president.

The rally wrapped up around 7 p.m.

Update, Oct. 15: This article has been updated to include the Yale's Office of Public Affairs & Communications' statement about contract negotiations.

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Shyam Suva / Contributing Photographer
With contract negotiations underway, unions and their supporters marched down College Street and protested on the plaza on Wednesday evening. The rally appeared to be the Yale unions' first on campus since the University updated its protest guidelines in 2024.