On Campus

Columbia Eyes Collaboration with Obama Post-Presidency

Fall 2015



Barack Obama at Barnard's Commencement in 2012. Photo courtesy of the Columbia Daily Spectator.

When the Barack Obama Foundation announced this spring that it will build the Obama Presidential Center on Chicago's South Side, near the University of Chicago, it made another pledge — one of considerable interest to the Columbia community, including President Obama's fellow alumni: the foundation plans to develop an academic partnership with Columbia.

The nonprofit's May 12 press release stated, "The Foundation intends to maintain a presence at Columbia University for the purpose of exploring and developing opportunities for a long-term association."

Columbia President Lee C. Bollinger welcomed the news, saying in a statement, “We are very pleased that the foundation announced that it intends to establish a presence at Columbia … We look forward to hosting the foundation on our campus, and take great pride in being part of the post-presidency of our alumnus Barack Obama, and First Lady Michelle Obama.”

Columbia was one of four universities selected by the Obama Foundation last year as finalists to host the Obama Presidential Center, which will include a library and museum. The other finalists, in addition to the University of Chicago, were the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Hawaii.



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