

## Campus Update 11-24-20

Dear Community Members of Stowe,

On Tuesday, November 17th, there was a bias-related incident where an unidentified person/s vandalized a bulletin board located on the second floor stairwell of side of Stowe with apartments ending on 05-08. The bulletin board provided information about diversity related resources at UConn with the titled “\_\_\_\_\_ Lives Matter” with various marginalized identity groups listed below the line including Black, LGBTQ+, Hispanic, and Disabled (in reference to persons with disabilities). An unidentified person/s filled in the title with the word “Blue” to make the board read “Blue Lives Matter”.

When situations like this occur, it is important to not only take a stand against the bias action, but also to educate on why the incident can be viewed as offensive and harmful. The statement “Blue Lives Matter” negatively impacts marginalized groups, with a specific emphasis on the black community. Professional staff members from Residence Life are currently building an interactive resource page and brief assessment form for any student to learn more about concepts related to the Black Lives Matter movement. The resource page and assessment form will be sent to the community at the beginning of December. We invite you all to engage with these resources to promote constructive dialogue with other community members.

Article: “Black Lives Matter and Blue Lives Matter Explained” by the Landmark

<https://www.landmarkschool.org/landmark360/black-lives-matter-and-blue-lives-matter-explained>

This is only one perspective on how the statement “Blue Lives Matter” can be harmful to marginalized groups, especially towards the black community. We believe it is crucial to be informed about these difficult topics without judgment or persecution. Although we may stray away from these difficult conversations, we must engage in discourse and further our understanding of various identity groups to strive for equity and inclusion in our communities.

Definition of Bias-Related Incident:

A bias-related incident is an incident that negatively targets, intimidates, or threatens an individual or group due to race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, gender, sexual

orientation, gender identity or expression, age, physical, mental, and intellectual disabilities, as well as past/present history of mental disorders. This includes, but is not limited to, graffiti or images that harass or intimidate individuals or groups due to the above characteristics.

We hope that the person(s) responsible for this behavior will choose to make a different decision in the future. If there is anything our staff can do to assist you, please feel free to contact the Hall Directors of Hilltop Apartments with the information below. We are more than willing to meet with you individually should you want to discuss the incident. Thank you all for your time and I look forward to discussing this further with anyone interested.

Hilltop Apartments Hall Director Contact Information:

- Troy Gonsalves: Email: [troy.gonsalves@uconn.edu](mailto:troy.gonsalves@uconn.edu) Phone: (860) 486-5983
- Anabelle McDonald: Email: [anabelle.mcdonald@uconn.edu](mailto:anabelle.mcdonald@uconn.edu) Phone: (860) 207-5138
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Best,

Troy Gonsalves, Anabelle McDonald, and Sydney Wein