

## Campus Update 9-21-20

Dear Residents of fourth floor Vinton/Beecher,

On Friday, September 18th, there was a bias-related incident where unidentified person/s vandalized a poster board with messages that read “BLM is a joke... [you] funny tho” and “Bin Laden the GOAT #BLM” in your community. At the University of Connecticut, we strive to create a safe and inclusive community for all students.

You are invited to join members of our community for a meeting on Wednesday, September 23rd , at 8pm via WebEx to discuss the impact of this incident and how we will continue to work together to promote an environment of productive dialogue in which individuals and groups of people aren’t hurt or harmed. The link to the meeting will be sent via email 10 minutes prior to the meeting.

When situations like this occur, it is important to understand why the incident can be viewed as offensive. We would like to provide you with a video for your viewing consideration.

What's wrong with saying "all lives matter"? | Black Lives Matter (2+ minute video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s29qACe0mEA>

This is one perspective on the Black Lives Matter Vs All Lives Matter debate. We think it is important to have conversations about difficult topics like this without judgement. We understand that people with differing opinions might stray away from these conversations. Because of our commitment to educating our residents, the Towers Hall Directors are offering individual virtual meetings to residents who want to learn more about this and want to engage in civil discourse about the topic in individual meetings. Please note the contact information at the end of this email to reach out to a Hall Director if you are interested.

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.

The University of Connecticut values the freedom all members of our community have to express their opinions. It is only through such an environment that the educational values of our institution can be attained and our community can thoughtfully engage in the continual discourse that is necessary for the process of discovery and the creation of new knowledge.

While free expression is important in having productive dialogue, the University acts when harm occurs to members of our community. In January of 2015, the University developed its Bias Response Protocol to support students who experience an incident that either is or appears to be bias-related. Such incidents are addressed through UConn's Student Code of Conduct, UConn Police, or restorative conversations within the impacted community.

You are part of this residential community. As such, we ask that you assist us in preventing further incidents of this nature by following these steps:

1. Hold your peers accountable for the decisions they choose to make.
2. Maintain responsibility for your actions and the actions of any guests that you choose to bring into the community as per our guest policy.
3. Be an active bystander! If you see something like this happening, please let a staff member know. This can be your RA, Residence Hall Director, UConn Police, the Dean of Students Office, the Office of Institutional Equity, the Office of Community Standards or the Office of Residential Life.

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 us at the Towers Hall Director Office: 860-933-2220 or via email [joseph.revander@uconn.edu](mailto:joseph.revander@uconn.edu), [daryl.yingling@uconn.edu](mailto:daryl.yingling@uconn.edu), [victor.osorio@uconn.edu](mailto:victor.osorio@uconn.edu).

Best,

Victor Osorio

Residence Hall Director

Pronouns: He/Him/His

University of Connecticut

Department of Residential Life