

## Campus Update 9-25-20

To the UConn Community:

As you know, last weekend the word “Black,” in the “Black Lives Matter” message that was painted on the Spirit Rock on the Storrs campus was scratched out and replaced with “All,” altering the statement to read “All Lives Matter.”

We write to share an update: After reviewing the incident, including video footage in which the license plate of the individual responsible was visible, the university determined that the person has no known current connection to UConn – meaning they are not a student or an employee – and they do not live in Mansfield.

While we are relieved that the person responsible is not a member of our community, that doesn’t change what took place, which we saw as an unmistakable attempt to antagonize and demean people on our campuses, especially in the context of national events. We deeply regret the harm that this incident has had on members of our community.

After consulting with the state’s attorney’s office, it was determined that this harmful act didn’t constitute a crime under state statute and no charges would apply. Even so, painting the Spirit Rock is a campus tradition that is intended solely for UConn students and student organizations. We will update our policy on the rock to reflect this. While that by itself won’t prevent something similar from happening, it is our hope that it will give the university greater leverage in addressing it.

Sincerely,

Franklin Tuitt, VP & Chief Diversity Officer

Michael Gilbert, VP for Student Affairs