

Recent Incidents in our Community 3-30-21

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To the UConn community,

In recent days, we have been made aware of several incidents of hateful conduct and speech directed at members of our community on the Storrs campus. This includes vile anti-Semitic graffiti on a building near Hillel and deeply offensive comments directed at members of the LGBTQ+ community, among others. Our disappointment is matched only by our concern: Any such attack on students, faculty, or staff members is totally unacceptable and has no place at this University.

We are taking these incidents very seriously, and any violations of the law or the Student Code of Conduct will be answered with disciplinary measures and law enforcement where appropriate. But these matters are not only formal violations of codes and statutes: They are directly counter to the spirit and purpose of education, and inimical to the life of a community of scholars and students.

The past year has been extraordinarily difficult for our University, our state, our country, and our world. Despite those hardships, many religious traditions observed this very week recognize the strength of faith and perseverance through the celebrations of Easter and Passover. Beyond these moments recognized by these specific traditions, there remains a true beacon for all of us of the importance of togetherness, compassion, and care displayed by the vast majority of UConn students, faculty, and staff members. We are emerging from a time of challenge as a stronger community, which is why these incidents are particularly hurtful and upsetting. We cannot – we will not – allow the hateful words and conduct of a few individuals damage the spirit of unity that animates this University.

We want to direct you to some of the resources available at UConn, which help strengthen our community by celebrating our diversity:

- [The Office for Diversity and Inclusion](#), which offers a wealth of resources and information, as well as the ability to report a bias incident.
- [The Office of Institutional Equity](#), which administers UConn's non-discrimination policies and offers a suite of vital trainings.

- [The cultural centers on campus](#), which provide students with a truly remarkable range of programs, as well as offering supportive, sustaining environments for students from a diverse range of backgrounds.
- [The faith communities that serve UConn](#), offering spiritual support and direction to the rich variety of traditions in our community.
- [The Center for Students with Disabilities](#), which provides outstanding support and programming for our students.

It is also important to remember that if you are the victim of or witness to a crime, [the UConn Police Department](#) is here to protect each and every member of our community.

It is distressing to me that a letter like this one is necessary, but it is absolutely urgent for us to make clear to all of our students, faculty, and staff members that you are vital, valued members of the UConn community. For those who feel distressed or uncertain in the face of incidents of abhorrent conduct, let us be as clear as we can: Hate has no place here. Together, we will overcome this, as we can overcome any challenge when we face it as a united University.

Regards,

Tom Katsouleas

President

Carl Lejuez

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Frank Tuitt

Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer

Eleanor “Elly” JB Daugherty

Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students