

Statement from the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies Campus Racial Climate Task Force

The incidents that have occurred across campus against the Islamic community as well as the postings designed to provoke and intimidate students of color are the antithesis of our University's mission and commitment, as well as its recent initiative to promote diversity, equity and inclusion. Although the actions of the past few months have been troubling, we commend all of the students, faculty, staff, and administrators who valiantly stepped forward to combat these heinous acts. We are particularly impressed by and proud of the students at the University of Michigan and their supporters who have made plain their hurt, fear, anger, and resolve to meet such attacks with courage and unity. We, as members of the DAAS Racial and Campus Climate Task Force, stand in solidarity with all those affected by these displays of inhumane treatment.

Our group emerged from student activism, and we proudly stand with all students who have suffered through unrelenting toxicity and who continue to speak out against injustice wherever it occurs. The abhorrent ideas and acts that our campus has faced demonstrate that there exists a clear, real, and present danger to many in our community. Individuals at risk include disproportionate numbers of women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender and queer people, Muslims, immigrants, undocumented individuals, and those who have undocumented family members as well as students from racial/ethnic minority groups.

It is time for all of us to stand up for what we value: an academic community devoted to inclusion, diversity, and equity. We applaud our students for taking on the rights and responsibilities of civil civic engagement, which include principled protest. Now more than ever, the University of Michigan bears a special responsibility as a public university to uphold its values as an academic community dedicated to inclusion and democratic ideals. We in DAAS invite you to join us in collective actions to denounce and defy bigotry and intolerance. We are proud of our reputation as a safe space on campus and vow to remain so for those seeking knowledge, solace, support, and acceptance.