
From: Bernadine Fong <fongbernadine@fhda.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2022 9:52 AM
To: foothill; ASFC Elected & Appointed
Cc: centralservices
Subject: An urgent message from President's Cabinet

Dear Members of the Foothill community,

Today our hearts are heavy with the news of and horrific race-motivated mass shooting yesterday in Buffalo, New York, that left 10 people dead and three injured. News reports are stating that the perpetrator is an 18-year-old white male, who drove three hours to commit a premeditated act of mass murder, armed with assault weapons and tactical gear. Early reports are stating that a manifesto laced with racial hatred was posted online by the assailant, hours before the attack.

The racist murders carried out in Buffalo were intended to cause fear, to create mistrust and to undermine the progress we thought we were making as a nation to reconcile our national history of racism, and efforts to broaden understanding of how we can operate in an anti-racist framework. This is a deliberate act intended to destroy lives, to pit white-against-black and to call into question progress we are making as a nation to improve race relations.

As a college community, our mission is counter to the goals of extremism, and our work around racial equity is a deliberate act of counter racial terrorism, counter racism, pro education and pro community building. But when events occur such as yesterday's horrific massacre, it makes us feel helpless, like our goal is futile, and a sense of overwhelming anger and injustice can prevail.

We must take time to grieve, to feel the pain of this crime, and to sit with our emotions. But we will not be paralyzed by this act. We will respond and we will draw on our strength to support those whose lives have been lost and devastated by this act, and we will continue our work with the urgency these times require, to counter domestic extremism, to educate our students and community, and to build bridges and ties among people in our community.

So what do we do? We stay centered, we listen, we draw upon the expertise within our community and the collective knowledge in our district, all of which is mighty. We use our connections to each other to build bridges beyond our college into our community, to engage and inform, and to dialogue. We create ongoing information campaigns and work with our local agencies to defeat terrorism efforts and to address the proliferation of hate messaging in our community. We must be clear that hate groups are active and an ongoing threat to our nation, and therefore we must not be silent or passive, but forceful and deliberate, in countering this.

We look forward to working together and exploring both ongoing efforts to address extremism and hate, and ways we can make a difference to improve the health of our nation.

Specific activities and resources will be publicized tomorrow, Monday, once we have contacted the appropriate resources and how to make them available.

Sincerely,

President's Cabinet

*Ajani Byrd, Kurt Hueg, Teresa Ong, Simon Pennington, Elias Regalado,
Laurie Scolari, Ram Subramaniam, Bret Watson, and Bernadine Chuck Fong*