

Subject: Feb. 13 Zoom bombing of Alpha Kappa Alpha event
Date: Monday, February 15, 2021 at 10:26:10 AM Eastern Standard Time
From: Office of the President
To: SRU Stakeholder

Feb. 15, 2021

To the University Community:

On the evening of Feb. 13, a virtual poetry reading, workshop and discussion of prominent Black poets, hosted by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, and part of the University's Black History Month schedule of events, was interrupted by individuals for the sole purpose of posting racist and derogatory remarks and images.

The acts perpetrated by these individuals were reprehensible and do not in any way, shape or form align with our institutional goal of fostering a campus climate that is free from discrimination, intolerance and bigotry. Frankly, I am disgusted and saddened that members of our community were attacked in this way.

I can only imagine the hurt, anger, and frustration felt by our students who were witness to this act of ignorance and hostility while they were gathered together in peace and friendship.

When University administrators were made aware of the situation, SRU's Campus Inclusion Response Team met as soon as possible to review the situation. The CIRT is designed to take action when incidents related to bigotry, harassment, or intimidation are initiated by or directed at people who are part of the campus community. As noted in the Feb. 10 campuswide email announcing CIRT, this group serves in a direct advisory role to me to guide decision-making and heighten the levels of support for our community when we face such incidents.

We have shared details of the incident with law enforcement and if the perpetrators of this heinous act are found to be members of the SRU community, appropriate action will be taken as outlined by our Student Code of Conduct or other relevant campus policies.

University administrators will also be working with student clubs and organizations to discuss options for increasing online security for all future virtual events in order to prevent similar incidents from happening. Additionally, CIRT will continue to meet throughout the next few weeks to continue discussion and monitoring of this situation.

If you or someone you know has information about the incident of Feb. 13, I encourage you to [fill out a CARE Referral](#) so that the University can investigate and appropriately respond to the incident.

If anyone has been affected by this or other intolerable actions and need someone to talk with, please contact the Counseling Center at 724.738.2034 or the Student Support Office at 724.738.2121 or by [filling out a CARE Referral](#).

I've said this before but it bears repeating, each day we all play a critical role to inspire and foster a sense of belonging for all people, particularly African Americans and other members of marginalized

and intersecting communities, as we, together, celebrate their cultures and experiences. We must remain aware of the significance of our actions and how they influence those around us. I encourage you to engage with and learn about the lived experiences of all members of our campus community.

If this incident disturbs and disappoints you as much as it does me, I encourage you to show your support for the African American members of our community by participating in the wide range of events the University has planned to celebrate Black History Month. A great way to show your support is by showing up, listening, and learning about the many contributions that African Americans have made to our nation's history.

Sincerely,

William Behre
President