

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

April 2, 2018

TO: Members of the MSU Community

We have received many expressions of concern raised by members of the campus community and beyond regarding the racist images and racial epithets circulating on social media posted by someone associated with the MSU community. MSU students, faculty and staff feel anger, pain, and a strong sense of frustration. Actions and words that demean and denigrate individuals and groups based on their identity have no place at Michigan State.

We know that racist forms of expression exist, and that this recent incident is not an isolated incident at MSU, or the broader community. We know that when these incidents occur, they build on a long history of acts of racial discrimination, microaggressions and insensitivity against people of color, and are often unreported for many reasons, including the fear of invalidation and backlash. This time so many of you took action to report the posts and say, “Not at MSU!”

We know how to show support for each other. We have reached across our differences to show our support when others have been hurt and we need to show that collective support for those affected by this most recent incident. Our African American community deserves nothing less—and this serves as a reminder that we still have work to do as we build a community that lives our value of inclusion.



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In a recent communication to students in the residence halls, we acknowledged that any form of oppression towards minoritized groups creates a harmful environment that negatively affects the lives and wellbeing of many Spartans. We firmly believe in and affirm the right to a campus and educational climate where different cultures, identities, backgrounds and ethnicities are honored, respected and celebrated appropriately. We hope that true Spartans will share our belief that hateful expressions that hurt members of our community have no place here and join us in identifying ways to support each other going forward.

Over the coming days and weeks, we will continue to work with students, faculty, staff and campus leadership to address the impact of this incident on the community. To find out more about our initial campus efforts, please refer to the “Community Response to Resident Social Media Post”: <http://liveon.msu.edu/content/diversity-and-inclusion>.

We are openly committed to do better for our Spartan community, for our society and for the future generations of Spartans to come.

Sincerely,

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and Intercultural Initiatives

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