

Dear Members of the Lehigh Community,

As we learn more about the climate of unrest and protest related to diversity issues on campuses across the country, we reaffirm our institutional commitment to ensure the Lehigh community is doing its best to enhance and embrace diversity and to build a safe, respectful and inclusive community. We realize that the work to collectively nurture a campus climate characterized by respect and dignity for all is ongoing and draws on all of us to contribute.

Our collective effort directed to these issues has been critical in the progress we've made. We recognize that there is a sense of urgency, and that reflection on what has and has not been achieved at Lehigh must inform how we move forward. The commitment across campus constituencies must be unwavering, and we will continue to create and support a campus community that embraces diversity and inclusion and is deeply enriched by both.

Our many conversations with students about the issues surrounding the residential environment and the importance of community at Lehigh reveal a range of views, from frustrated to indifferent to optimistic. It is also clear that many opportunities exist to make Lehigh more welcoming for everyone.

We pledge our continued focus on this work, and we ask for your ideas, your support, and perhaps most importantly, your continued candor.

We'd also like to acknowledge a portion of the work being done by many across campus, including the following:

- The Council for Equity and Community – a group of more than 30 faculty, staff and students dedicated to sustaining an inclusive climate – is an effective force on this campus for awareness, change, dialogue and coordination of efforts across colleges and constituencies. You can be part of the conversation on the CEC site at <http://www1.lehigh.edu/diversity/cec>.
- The Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning has organized two workshops (so far) for faculty on creating more inclusive classrooms—which have been well-attended. These are by faculty, for faculty, with a goal of helping faculty learn how they can make their own classrooms places where all our students feel welcome and can be successful.
- We're continuing our implementation of the Restorative Practices model, which is geared more toward repairing harm and building community than punishment. The model is being piloted by the Student Affairs division through residence halls and as part of the conduct process on a voluntary basis. Several Student Affairs staff are undergoing training this semester, and efforts in this area will increase in the spring semester.
- This past summer, Lehigh hosted its second Summer Scholars Institute, an intensive, three-week preparatory experience that is designed for first year students with academic and leadership potential. Offered through the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the program offered 37 students courses in chemistry, economics, theater, calculus, English, college transition and identity exploration to help them prepare for Lehigh's rigorous academic environment.

- This past January, Lehigh hired its first Equal Opportunity Compliance Coordinator, Karen Salvemini. Over the course of the past year, she has worked closely with others across the university to train approximately 2,400 students, faculty, and staff on recognizing and reporting harassment, as well as on prevention, education and response to sexual misconduct. For more information on resources available to those who have experienced or witnessed harassment or sexual misconduct, please go to <https://eocc.lehigh.edu/node/7>.
- We are pleased to report a very strong response to The Lehigh Survey, which was designed by Lehigh faculty members with expertise in this area. Across the board, 41.8% of the campus participated in the survey (65% of the staff, 53% of the faculty and 36.5% of the students). The results of the survey, available early next semester, will provide useful information that will help guide our path forward.

Our goal, as we move forward, is to sustain an environment that is welcoming and inclusive and to affirm a shared commitment to a dynamic culture that provides a supportive foundation for intellectual and personal growth.

Sincerely,

John D. Simon
President

Patrick V. Farrell
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs