

August 14, 2017

Dear Iowa State Community:

I have been following the appalling events in Charlottesville, Virginia. The bigotry, hate, and violence demonstrated by white supremacists are abhorrent.

While Charlottesville and the University of Virginia may be more than 1,000 miles from Ames and Iowa State University, we must not ignore what has happened nor pretend it does not impact us. We recognize that this was not a localized gathering; people traveled across the country to attend, demonstrating that racism and bigotry are still poisoning our country. The loss of life and injuries are tragic and senseless. This is terrorism masquerading as free expression.

Next week when classes begin, Iowa State will welcome students, faculty and staff from all across the country and around the globe. We value people of all races, ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, abilities, and backgrounds. Hatred, racism, and bigotry have no place at Iowa State University.

In our continuing efforts to improve our campus, senior leadership has been meeting over the summer to reassess our approach to campus climate, train campus leaders, and enhance campus security. We have a previously scheduled meeting Thursday with a broader campus team and we will incorporate the events in Charlottesville into our leadership development.

We all have a responsibility to work together to eliminate hatred and bigotry. We invite you – students, faculty, staff, and administrators – to engage with us to work toward this goal.

Sincerely,
Benjamin J. Allen

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Interim President