UC SANTA BARBARA

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UC Santa Barbara Staff

Letter from the President

On Monday, Aug. 14, University of California President Janet Napolitano sent the following letter to the UC community in response to the violence in Charlottesville.

To the University of California Community:

Over the weekend, our country experienced violent and tragic events on the streets of Charlottesville, Virginia. As the leader of the University of California, an institution dedicated to the vibrant and respectful exchange of ideas, I write to you today to condemn these hateful actions by white supremacists and to reaffirm UC's values of diversity and inclusion.

As I stated over the weekend, UC abhors the violence and hate displayed in Charlottesville that perverted Americans' right to speak freely. We stand in solidarity with our colleagues at the University of Virginia in denouncing this shameful display and with the UVA students who bravely stood up to a crowd bent on violence. We offer our profound condolences to the family and friends of Heather Heyer, to all the individuals injured in the course of peaceful counterprotests, and to the Virginia state troopers who lost their lives.

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution grants us all freedom of expression. University campuses in particular are meant to foster an exchange of ideas, and to teach students how to respectfully approach viewpoints different from their own — even when those viewpoints are offensive and hurtful. But the acts of domestic terrorism we saw in Charlottesville represented an assault on our cherished values of diversity, inclusiveness and tolerance. We must continue to speak and act against the shameful behavior we witnessed over the weekend and ensure that our colleges and universities, and our nation as a whole, remain safe and civil for all.

Diversity is a defining feature of the University of California and we embrace it as a necessary and valued part of our campus communities. I believe, as I know you do, that our differences — in race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, socioeconomic status, abilities, experience and more — make us stronger.

UC remains committed to providing a safe, supportive, responsive and equitable environment for every member of the university community. We reject all forms of discrimination, commit to fostering an atmosphere of respect and inclusion, and pledge to defend the right to free speech.

This summer and fall, as UC students, faculty and staff return to their campuses, I ask that we all recommit to these enduring values of diversity, equity and inclusion, and work to live up to these ideals in all that we do.

Yours very truly,

Janet Napolitano

President

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.