



State Universities
of Massachusetts

August 21, 2017

State University Presidents Stand Against Racism and Bigotry:

In light of the recent events in Charlottesville and in Boston, we, the Presidents of the nine state universities of Massachusetts, stand united against racism, anti-Semitism, and other forms of discrimination. We pledge our commitment to continue to ensure that all of our students and employees are afforded the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed in teaching and learning environments characterized by educational excellence and respect.

Michael Signer, mayor of Charlottesville, Virginia wrote in a recent op-ed in the New York Times, that “our colleges and universities must re-engage with the public, to see themselves, as they once did, as sites for community building and education. And they must recommit to instilling the values of deliberation and civility in their students.” We agree. It is in this spirit that we continue to foster educational environments which aid our students in the development of their abilities to consider, discuss, and debate divergent viewpoints and ideas with passion and civility.

We are very proud of the overwhelming rejection of hate and division demonstrated in Boston over the weekend. We are reminded of Theodore Parker, a Bostonian involved in the abolitionist movement, who wrote “the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” We join with individuals and organizations in Massachusetts and across America that take thoughtful, peaceful actions on a daily basis to ensure civil rights for all.

A statue of Horace Mann, son of Massachusetts and father of public higher education, sits on the front lawn of the Massachusetts State House to remind us that “education . . . is the great equalizer . . . the balance-wheel of the social machinery.” Centuries later we reflect on his words and affirm that our State Universities have and will continue to provide accessible and exceptional education to all of our students.

Sincerely,

President Frederick W. Clark Jr.
Bridgewater State University
Chairperson, Council of State University Presidents

President Francis X. McDonald
Massachusetts Maritime Academy

President F. Javier Cevallos
Framingham State University

President John Keenan
Salem State University

President Richard S. Lapidus
Fitchburg State University

President Ramon S. Torrecilha
Westfield State University

President David P. Nelson
Massachusetts College of Art and Design

President Barry Maloney
Worcester State University

President James F. Birge
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts