



A Message from University of Kentucky

PRESIDENT ELI CAPILOUTO



Dear Campus Community,

The tragedy that occurred in the Atlanta area earlier this week — another heartbreaking incident of mass killing — provokes a mournful reminder of the painful gap that remains: the chasm between the world in which we aspire to live and the one that seemingly, too often, prevails.

Whatever the stated motive behind this specific tragedy, we know all too well that a rising rate of anti-Asian sentiment has resulted, across the country, in instances of abhorrent behavior directed at our brothers and sisters of Asian heritage.

So much more unites us than divides us; what we share — our humanity and our community — means more than any differences of race, ethnicity or background. We are one community. And that means everyone — regardless of who you are, what you look like, where you come from, how you identify or who you love — has a place at the University of Kentucky.

These are easy words to write. Sadly, they do not always reflect the reality in which members of our community must live.

Our Center for Support and Intervention and UK International Center have written today to members of our international community and, in particular, to students, faculty and staff of Asian and Asian-American heritage, to remind them that they are valued members of the UK family. Resources on our campus are available to support them right now. [You can read that letter and view a list of those support resources here.](#)

This is how we respond to tragedy and expressions of hate.

The question before us, still, is how we move forward.

More than a half century ago, Robert F. Kennedy challenged a gathering in apartheid South Africa that it would take “numberless diverse acts of courage and belief” to change human history. It was the idea each one of us — as individuals — has a role to play. In doing so, each one of us can send forth a “tiny ripple of hope” to collectively

“build a current that can sweep down the mightiest wall of oppression and resistance.”

Continents apart and a lifetime away from that moment, a woman traveled to Atlanta this week to lay a bouquet at the site of a violent and hateful act. “You have to embrace everybody,” she said. “America is everybody.”

May we commit ourselves every day — as individuals and as a collective community of people who share a common humanity — to sending forth ripples of hope, ripples that speak to our desire to embrace everybody. That is the community we want to be; that is the community we must commit to creating together.

Eli Capilouto
President