Dear Campus Community,

Earlier today in the Melville residence hall a racial epithet was discovered scrawled across a poster denouncing racism. The poster, defaced with the N-word, was located in a third-floor stairwell. Upon discovery, the UMass Police Department was called in and subsequently took possession of the poster and launched an investigation. In an effort to identify the perpetrator, UMPD investigators are reviewing footage from surveillance cameras, collecting data from card readers at residence hall entrances, and interviewing staff and residents.

To enhance security, an additional surveillance camera has been installed in the building, residence hall security staffing will be enhanced, and security patrols in the vicinity of Melville will be increased. More information about steps we are taking to address this incident, including support services, are listed at the bottom of this message.

This cowardly act of racism, as others that have preceded it, is an attempt to intimidate African American students in Melville, and by extension students from diverse backgrounds across campus. It comes at a time when other campuses throughout the country have been targeted by hate groups as well and just a day after flyers from an organization, which is listed as a white nationalist hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, were found posted on campus property.

My message to these purveyors of ignorance, intolerance and hate who hide in anonymity is that we will not be intimidated. We will not be deterred in our efforts to continually strive for a more inclusive community that welcomes all and embraces the dignity of all. To all of our students who have been the targets of hate, do not despair. We care about you and stand with you. These hateful acts strengthen the resolve of every member of the UMass community to reject hatred in all its forms and stand united in defense of tolerance, diversity and inclusion.

Sincerely,

Kumble R. Subbaswamy

Chancellor

Steps Being Taken

- At 7 o’clock tonight in the Melville Main Lounge there will be an urgent community meeting for residents in wake of this morning’s incident. We will offer continued support and resources to residents who have been subjected to acts of
hate. Counseling Center staff will be present and available for those who need them immediately following tonight’s meeting.

- Staff will be available in Melville throughout the day on Friday, November 9 to meet with residents of Melville and Thoreau halls to answer questions and provide support.

- Residential hall security is being enhanced, and the frequency of security patrols in the vicinity of Melville will be increased.

Anyone with information that could aid in the investigation should contact UMass Police at 413-545-2121.

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