October 6, 2021

Dear Campus Community,

The investigation I announced last week to determine the source of the racist emails that were sent to members of Black student organizations is underway and is in its initial stages. The comprehensive probe is being conducted by Stroz Friedberg Digital Forensics.

Since retaining Stroz Friedberg, we have provided its investigators with the emails in question and additional supporting materials. While we are limited in what we can reveal about the methods of the investigation for fear of tipping off the perpetrator, we can share that the investigators will assess the online targeting of the UMass community across multiple sources, including dark websites, and will leverage custom tools as well as proprietary and commercial datasets in their probe. Stroz Friedberg will use similar techniques to provide guidance on whether the emails to UMass Black students were an isolated matter or part of a larger white supremacist campaign.

I want to assure you that evidence gathered through the investigation leading to the person or group responsible for the hateful, racist emails will be shared with law enforcement officials for potential criminal prosecution. Currently, it is unknown whether the perpetrator is part of the campus community or not at all affiliated with UMass. If the source is someone in the campus community, that person will face severe university sanctions, up to and including expulsion or employment termination, as well as a referral to the District Attorney for criminal prosecution.

Anyone with information related to the emails should contact the UMass Police Department. If you choose to do so confidentially, you can use the [UMass Police Department’s anonymous witness form](#).

Finally, I want to reiterate that we are committed to on-going support for our students who have been victimized by these hateful, racist emails and other acts
of racism that have occurred this semester. In meetings with some of our Black student leaders over the past week, my leadership team gained valuable insight on how we can more fully realize this commitment. I pledge to you that we will do everything within our power to alleviate the burden that these racist acts have placed on our Black students. In doing so, we will redouble our efforts to foster a campus community grounded in justice, equity, dignity and respect.

Sincerely,

Chancellor Kumble R. Subbaswamy

University of Massachusetts Amherst