

On Nov 12, 2015

**Email from Jonathan Brand, President of Cornell College**

Everyone is, no doubt, aware of the events occurring at the University of Missouri, Yale University, and other institutions across the country where students, faculty members, and staff members feel marginalized, ignored, and threatened, both by the actions and inactions of others. To be sure, these events are a part of a larger dynamic, as evidenced by the troubling national events of last year. They are also a part of a larger national dialogue that is important to have.

This reminds us to reflect on what these incidents mean for us as a community, and how we might do better as an institution of higher learning. Indeed, Cornell has not been immune to acts of discrimination. Ultimately, we seek above all else to foster an environment in which we recognize the dignity and worth of each individual. Our campus community members come from all over the world, with a wonderfully diverse range of backgrounds, experiences, abilities, opinions, and needs. Each person deserves to be respected, to be heard with our open minds and hearts, and to belong in our community. Together, and individually, here on our campus and elsewhere, we must stand for equality and inclusion every day—for everyone. That diligence is necessary in order to achieve our educational mission.

No doubt, our noble dream is not attainable in an environment of distrust, hatred, anger, or thoughtlessness. Hard work will always exist in the space around community and expression. But, it's important work.

At Cornell, we have teammates, roommates, classmates, clubmates, best friends, advisors, mentors, officemates, and departmental colleagues —just to name a few of our important daily relationships. We depend on the kindness, respect, and humanity that we regularly show each other. Expand that spirit to everyone. Get to know people who are different from you. Listen to each other's stories.

Jonathan