



May 24, 2017

Dear University of Maryland and Bowie State University communities,

We are deeply saddened by the recent tragedy that took place May 20 on the University of Maryland campus. [Coverage of the incident](#), which occurred only 200 feet from a residence hall, reveals that the University of Maryland Police Department is working with the FBI to investigate the fatal stabbing as a potential hate crime. Acts of hatred and violence will not be tolerated within campus confines or elsewhere.

The University of Maryland Residence Hall Association (RHA) stands in solidarity with 2nd Lt. Richard W. Collins III, his family and friends, the Bowie State University community, and all those impacted by this tragic loss of life. We are committed to ensuring the safety and inclusion of all our diverse community members.

Our organization passed a [resolution](#) this past April that calls for increased support for services that benefit undocumented and minority students, including the improvement of a web portal that “incorporates resources offered by student organizations and connects students to relevant reporting mechanisms.” Under the resolution’s commitments, RHA also plans to collaborate with University of Maryland staff to explore opening additional on-campus space for students to engage in conversations surrounding diversity.

We plan to uphold these commitments in the upcoming academic year and continue to research other ways to better address the needs of *all* students who call our campus home. In these unsteady times, uniting resources and minds is vital. RHA will collaborate with fellow student organizations to share ideas and solutions that support and protect our campus residents, students, staff and faculty, and visitors.

The University of Maryland has generously provided [counseling services and space](#) for community members to grieve. RHA also welcomes any concerns, questions, or suggestions on this matter.

Our campus should be a place where all students feel comfortable expressing their diverse interests and opinions, and our residence halls should be safe spaces for students to live and learn. RHA echoes the sentiments of the University of Maryland Office of Diversity and Inclusion: “Together, and only together, can we fight back against hate in all its insidious forms.” We believe our community will show strength, resilience, and fearlessness in response to hate.

Sincerely,

The Residence Hall Association Executive Board, University of Maryland (marylandrha@umd.edu)