

Chancellor Richard Herman rhh@illinois.edu

reply-to: chancellor@illinois.edu

To: All Faculty & All Academic Professionals & All Civil Service Staff & All Undergrad Students & All Grad Students <everybody@illinois.edu>

date: Tue, May 5, 2009 at 3:45 PM

subject: MASSMAIL - Inclusive Environment

Dear Campus Community:

The continuing assaults on the Native American public art displays along Nevada Avenue are not only unlawful and malicious. They are also an assault on the values and fabric of Illinois. In other words, our university has also been vandalized.

This is unacceptable and I condemn these recent acts in the strongest language.

I am confident we will catch the culprits responsible but there is other work that also demands our full attention.

We need to begin thinking of these crimes differently. First, let us not view this as happening to someone else. What threatens one member of our community threatens all of us. We are all diminished in the wake of such an act. Indeed, Illinois is diminished and that should concern our community.

Secondly, let us remember what this university stands for. Illinois has always stood for the respect and dignity of all people and thought. We are the home of the widest interpretation of free speech and expression. We are the home of spirited debate along the confines of respect and civility. But we do not tolerate acts of intimidation, violence or hate.

Let me be clear. This is our very lifeblood. This is our DNA as a great public university. When our foundation as an inclusive and welcoming campus is threatened we need to unite as a community and collectively stand as one voice in condemnation. We have done so in the past and we will do so at this crucial moment.

Let us reaffirm our commitment to making Illinois a safe, tolerant, and inclusive environment for everyone.

Richard Herman
Chancellor

This mailing approved by:
The Office of the Chancellor