

Subject: April 14 Community Gathering

Date: Tuesday, April 5, 2016 at 3:07:54 PM Central Daylight Time

From: Mark Burstein

To: STUDENT-L, FACULTY-L, STAFF-L

Dear Lawrence Community,

On January 7, we held a Campus Community Gathering to provide information on the many initiatives undertaken to help Lawrence become a more inclusive community. The gathering allowed students, faculty and staff who attended to ask questions and to provide input that would further guide the initiatives that were planned or already underway. I have been heartened by the many people who came forward then, and who have come forward since, to talk about what is necessary for Lawrence to be more inclusive.

These conversations have not always been easy, but they are vital to our core values of creating and maintaining a welcoming and supportive community devoted to the education of its students. By discussing the ways that race, socio-economic status, and gender identity, as well as other issues impact the lives of Lawrentians, we are fulfilling our mission as an educational institution. We are living up to our core values.

The Administration, the President's Committee on Diversity Affairs, and the LUCC Committee on Diversity Affairs would like to invite you to join us at another community gathering to provide more information on the progress that we have made. Again, we will invite questions and input. On April 14, we will meet at the Pusey and Somerset Rooms of the Warch Campus Center from 4 to 7 pm. As before, this will be an open house format to provide an opportunity for people to work this meeting into their busy schedules.

Prior to attending, I invite everyone to visit the [Diversity and Inclusion](#) section of the Lawrence website. We have posted several updates on activities, additional resources and progress toward the commitments identified in my January 2 memo to the community. You will also find information and resources related to subsequent demands by members of GLOW.

A few of the topics to be discussed at the April 14 gathering and updated on the website include:

- Status of the search for the Vice President for Diversity & Inclusion and Associate Dean of the Faculty;
- Information about cultural competency training;
- Efforts to create a more inclusive classroom experience;
- Responses to GLOW demands: including plans to improve physical accommodations, resources that provide information about language, and ways we plan to change our databases and provide more options for students to designate the names they use;
- Status of our plans to launch "Sustained Dialogue" on the Lawrence campus

The recent arrest of one of our students has also prompted many members of our community to voice significant concerns about Lawrence's policies regarding sexual misconduct. Despite the many changes that were implemented last summer, these concerns require further discussion and additional changes to our policies and procedures. Those discussions are ongoing with SHARE, LUCC and SAASHA and we expect to announce the outcomes shortly. There will also be a station at the Community Gathering to allow for dialogue about these issues as well.

This is an important moment in the life of Lawrence. It is a time of change here and at colleges across the nation. Although the issues are complex, I am proud that students, faculty, staff, and alumni have engaged in these important conversations. In the service of continuing and deepening these conversations, CODA and the PCDA are co-sponsoring a presentation on the evening of April 21 by [Eddie Moore, Jr., Ph.D.](#), who has presented at "national and international conferences focusing on issues of diversity, youth, community,

education, cultural competency, leadership, white privilege and other forms of oppression.” The presentation will be held in Stansbury Theatre at 7:30 pm on Thursday, April 21.

These dialogues and the learning they provoke will ensure that Lawrence lives up to its core values: being a safe, welcoming learning community for all.

I look forward to seeing you on April 14.

Yours,

Mark

Mark Burstein
President, Lawrence University

Sampson House, 711 E. Boldt Way | Appleton, WI 54911-5699 | Office 920.832.6525