



April 15, 2019

Dear Central Family,

The turnout for the Blackout Rally last week was impressive, and I heartily applaud the students, faculty, and staff who took part. I am sorry to have missed the opportunity to voice my support and address concerns of the group. I was in Boston at a mandatory meeting critical to the University's accreditation process. On Friday morning, I met with representatives from two student groups, PRIDE and the Black Student Union (BSU), whose members did an outstanding job bringing light to issues we must aggressively and honestly address.

In addition to the racist graffiti on campus targeting African Americans, there have been reports of other hateful acts, specifically directed at our LGBTQ community. Two weeks ago, an anti-gay brochure promoting conversion therapy was strategically displayed in a classroom where LGBTQ fiction is taught. In February, a sign outside the LGBTQ Center was ripped down, and a student in the Center reported overhearing several people outside of the Center using gay slurs. These cases are being actively investigated by CCSU Police.

There is no place on our campus for hatred and bullying – none! These incidents are deeply troubling to me, so I am asking you to “Give Your Voice to Diversity.” Shortly, you will receive an email about an event, organized by a variety of student groups and the Division of Student Affairs, to give us all an opportunity to share what diversity means to us.

Also, I am looking forward to the arrival of Dr. Nancy “Rusty” Barceló, a nationally recognized expert in diversity in higher education, as we work together to transform our campus into a safe and welcoming space. In a couple of weeks, Dr. Barceló will join us for a day to lead an open forum focused on diversity and inclusion. In July, she will begin her role as interim Chief Diversity Officer for the University.

Last week's rally was a strong indication of the strength we have when we work together. I truly believe we are moving in a positive direction to becoming the inclusive and supportive environment we expect Central to be. As we continue the good fight, please remember you can share your campus culture concerns by posting anonymously to www.ccsu.edu/ccs.

Sincerely,

Zulma R. Toro
President