

President Morton Schapiro
Northwestern University
633 Clark Street
Evanston, IL 60208-1100

April 21, 2015

Dear President Schapiro,

We are 23 organizations representing hundreds of thousands of people who are very concerned about the safety and well-being of Jewish students at Northwestern University.

We are troubled by reports of two separate incidents of antisemitic graffiti discovered last week on your campus. On Saturday April 11, a swastika was drawn on a wall of the men's bathroom in the NU library, and on Wednesday April 15, a large swastika was found on the wall of a study lounge in the library.

We are aware that on Tuesday April 14 you sent an email to the campus community stating that the April 11 incident was "offensive to the entire Northwestern community and will not be tolerated." While we are pleased that you issued a statement, we are concerned that your message neglected to publicly acknowledge that a swastika is an antisemitic symbol associated with genocide perpetrated against the Jewish people, and that although it affects the entire campus community, it particularly targets NU's Jewish members for hatred and discrimination.

Campus antisemitism is a serious and growing problem. A recent study published by Trinity College and the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law reveals that 54% of Jewish American college and university students report experiencing or witnessing antisemitism on campus in the recent school year. The research reveals that this is a much more widespread problem than most realized.

In the last year, more than 18 college and university campuses around the country have been defaced with swastikas, in each case causing particular distress to Jewish students. There have also been multiple reports of antisemitic name-calling, threats, assaults and other acts of hate and discrimination. These acts are often linked to anti-Israel activity on campus, particularly boycott, divestment, sanctions (BDS) campaigns, such as the one leading up to the recent anti-Israel divestment vote in the NU student government.

We encourage you to take the following steps to deter future acts of anti-Jewish bigotry and demonstrate unequivocally your commitment to protecting Jewish students and all students on your campus:

- Swiftly, forcefully and publicly acknowledge that swastika graffiti is an act of antisemitism and will not be tolerated on campus.
- Publicly commit to educating University staff, including campus police, in identifying antisemitism and antisemitic hate crimes.
- Formally adopt the [U.S. State Department's definition of antisemitism](#) to fully and accurately identify all future acts of hate toward Jews.
- Allocate resources and publicly commit to educating students about antisemitism and anti-Jewish discrimination.

Taking these steps will show your students, their parents, alumni, and the larger community that Northwestern University stands firmly against bigotry and hatred, including antisemitism, and will protect all members of the campus community.

Thank you for considering our recommendations. We look forward to working with you to protect Jewish students.

Sincerely,

Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity (AEPi)

AMCHA Initiative

American Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists

Americans for Peace and Tolerance

BEAR: Bias Education, Advocacy & Resources

Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law

Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (CAMERA)

Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET)

Hasbarah Fellowships

Institute for Black Solidarity with Israel

Iranian American Jewish Federation

Israeli-American Council (IAC)

National Conference on Jewish Affairs

Middle East Political and Information Network (MEPIN)

Proclaiming Justice to the Nations

Scholars for Peace in the Middle East

Simon Wiesenthal Center

StandWithUs

Students and Parents Against Campus Anti-Semitism

The Israel Group

The Lawfare Project

Training and Education About the Middle East (T.E.A.M.)

Zionist Organization of America

Cc: Board of Trustees

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