

**AMCHA + 25 ORGANIZATIONS COMMEND DREXEL UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT FOR ACTIONS FOLLOWING
ANTISEMITIC VANDALISM**

VIA EMAIL

May 19, 2015

President John Anderson Fry
3141 Chestnut Street, Suite 103
Main Building
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear President Fry,

We are 26 organizations representing hundreds of thousands of people who are deeply concerned about the safety and well-being of Jewish students on college and university campuses across the country.

We heartily commend you for taking swift action to investigate a recent incident on your campus involving a swastika and the word "Jew" written near an Israeli flag displayed outside the dorm room of a Jewish student, as well as for your strong statement clearly identifying and condemning this antisemitic act. As you correctly point out:

"The swastika is not a symbol of protest or provocation. It is a symbol of antisemitism. There is no circumstance in which its use in response to an expression of Jewish identity can be construed as anything but a reference to historical attempts to threaten and even destroy the Jewish people. There is no place in our Drexel community for any person who would make use of this antisemitic symbol, knowing its historical and cultural significance."

As you may know, 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 20 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 and events which demonize and delegitimize the Jewish state.

In order to provide Drexel as a model of how to deter anti-Jewish and other acts of bigotry, we recommend that you take action in the following areas and that you do so in a public way:

- 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 commit to educating students about antisemitism and anti-Jewish discrimination.

Our experience and research have shown that these steps are critical to deterring future incidents. They will show your students, their parents, Drexel University alumni, and the larger community that Drexel stands firmly against bigotry and hatred, including antisemitism, and will protect all members of the campus community.

Thank you, once again, for your swift response and admirable statement condemning this recent act of antisemitism, and for your consideration of our additional recommendations to keep Jewish students safe.

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)
CUFI on Campus
Eagles Wings
Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET)
Hasbara 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 Christian Nexus
The Israel Group
The Lawfare Project
Training and Education About the Middle East (T.E.A.M.)
Zionist Organization of America

Cc: James Herbert, Interim Provost
Rabbi Howard Alpert, CEO Hillel of Greater Philadelphia