

VASSAR COLLEGE – SWASTIKA AT NOYES HOUSE – EMAIL FROM NOYES HOUSE TEAM

February 18, 2016

Dear Members of Noyes House,

We regretfully inform you that at the beginning of the spring semester, a carving of a Swastika was found on a resident's door in Noyes. This was discovered prior to a new resident moving in and was not directed at anyone, but still has significant implications for the Noyes community as a whole, including our Jewish community. If you are concerned and/or would like to discuss this incident, please feel free to contact your House Advisor, or any of the resources or people listed at the bottom of this letter.

Our community does not value hatred, ignorance, or prejudice. Unfortunately, the presence of this type of message creates the impression that ours is a community where this type of behavior is allowed. We must collectively take an active stance against prejudice in all its forms to ensure that each of us is free to thrive. If you witness a similar bias-related incident taking place, confront the person and remind them of our community values. If you find evidence of a bias-related incident, please inform the Department of Security or your House Advisor, Christina Winnett, immediately. You can also fill out a bias incident report, located at <http://campuslifeanddiversity.vassar.edu/birt/>.

Vassar College is a place where students are free to discuss their beliefs, whether or not the majority of the Vassar Community shares those beliefs. However, the posting of anonymous messages or the creation of graffiti in our House or across campus does not promote open dialogue; it strategically targets innocent students because of their perceived differences and imposes a baleful silence upon the community at large.

As stated in our mission, “the Office of Residential Life strives to provide a socially conscious, responsible and empowering residential community, where students are asked to reflect and commit to being socially just self, others and society.” The Office of Residential Life is committed to fostering acceptance and understanding in the houses. If you would like to discuss this or any other incident with an administrator, please contact Christina Winnett.

Given the circumstances, we would like to remind you all of resources that are available for students.

- The Listening Center (TLC) [845-235-2062](tel:845-235-2062)
- Campus Life and Diversity Office (including ALANA Center, LGBTQ Center, Women's Center, Religious and Spiritual Life, and International Services) , [845-437-5426](tel:845-437-5426).
- You can contact the following three resources by calling the CRC ([845-437-7221](tel:845-437-7221)):
 - CARES
 - Counselor on Call (an outside counseling service is on-call on weekends and after business hours on weekdays)
 - Administrator on Call (a House Advisor is on-call on weekends and after business hours on weekdays)

The following staff may be of particular support:

- Kerry Chaplin, Assistant Director for Religious and Spiritual Life and Rose and Irving Rachlin Advisor to Jewish Students [\(845\) 451-3920](tel:845-451-3920)
- Sam Speers, Assistant Dean of the College for Campus Life and Director of Religious and Spiritual Life [\(845\) 437-5550](tel:845-437-5550)

Thank you for your continued diligence and support. We rely on you to spread the word that bigotry and prejudice do not have a place here, not in our house.

Sincerely,

Noyes House Team