

OFFICIAL STATEMENT

February 2, 2022

United Faculty of Florida Stands in Solidarity with HBCUs, Condemns White Supremacy

As we enter Black History Month, once again white supremacists are threatening the safety and well-being of our faculty, staff and students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in Florida and across the nation. UFF stands with our two HBCU chapters: UFF-Florida A&M University and UFF-FAMU-Graduate Assistants United, and we are reaching out to our colleagues at Edward Waters University (AAUP) and Bethune Cookman University to offer our full support. This is the third round of coordinated bomb threats recently made against HBCUs across the U.S., and this type of hate has no place in our educational institutions or in our society. Just last weekend, Nazis rallied in Orlando, and time and time again we have seen overt acts of racism, harassment and aggression against Black faculty and students, including the hanging of a noose in a Black faculty member's classroom at UF. White supremacy needs to be called out and dealt with swiftly and with the full force of law to keep our HBCUs safe.

The United Faculty of Florida opposes white supremacy in all its forms and stands in solidarity with our HBCUs. We live in a country where the principles of liberty, freedom and justice are the backbone of our way of life, but we see time and again these principles failing our communities of color, particularly the Black community. We will be offering our full support to all Florida institutions impacted and will remain committed to dismantling white supremacy while building a future where this hate and violence can truly be eradicated.

A statement from UFF President Andrew Gothard:

"The United Faculty of Florida unequivocally stands with the students, faculty, staff, and community members who make Florida's Historically Black Colleges and Universities essential pillars of our state's higher education system. We condemn these on-going bomb threats targeted against Black people in our state at three HBCUs. We stand opposed to racism, bigotry, and white supremacy in all its forms. HBCUs and all Floridians have a welcome home in the United Faculty of Florida, and we look forward to seeing the perpetrators of these horrible acts brought to justice."

A statement from National Education Association President Becky Pringle:

"Every last student deserves to live & learn free from fear. As we start Black History Month, in this climate of banning books and censoring history, the message of these threats is unmistakable. Black students & educators are meant to feel silenced, targeted, afraid. We will not."

A statement from American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten:

"We cannot allow hatred, racism or bigotry in any of its forms to threaten the lives of students and faculty, as was so obvious here. The goal is to chill and intimidate but make no mistake—threats like this only strengthen our resolve to bring to justice those responsible, and to defeat the ideological poison driving their prejudice."

Questions or for more information, contact:

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UFF is the higher education affiliate of the Florida Education Association (FEA), jointly affiliated with the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT/AFL-CIO). UFF represents 25,000 faculty at all 12 public universities, at 16 colleges, and at the private Saint Leo University. UFF also represents more than 8,000 graduate assistants at four public universities.