

**Resolution on Support for Underrepresented Students at  
Appalachian State University**

WHEREAS, university officials received reports and complaints from students about a confrontation between students of different racial and/or ethnic backgrounds on September 14, 2016; and

WHEREAS, the confrontation was reported to have occurred when underrepresented students used water to remove from campus sidewalks statements written with chalk, which statements were perceived to be harassing in nature and directed toward students of color; and

WHEREAS, University police officers intervened to protect the safety of all students present at the time, consistent with their law enforcement duties and the university's mission; and

WHEREAS, multiple students have expressed concern about their personal safety due to anonymous statements or messages that they perceive to be threatening and targeting them as members of a particular racial or ethnic group; and

WHEREAS, Appalachian State University has long maintained policies that 1) prohibit harassment and other forms of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity and expression, political affiliation, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information or sexual orientation, and 2) respect and support the exercise by students, employees and visitors of constitutional rights to assemble and speak; and

WHEREAS, while rights of members of the university community and all citizens to assemble and engage in expressive activities are guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the North Carolina Constitution, those rights are not absolute and may be subject to reasonable time, place and manner restrictions imposed by the university to protect public safety and university property, to minimize disruption of university operations and to afford assembly and free speech opportunities to other members of the university community and public; and

WHEREAS, Appalachian State University, as a public institution of higher education, has obligations under both State and federal law to conduct its operations, enforce its policies and make its services available to all students without discrimination based on factors prohibited by law and policy as described above; and

WHEREAS, aside from legal obligations, Appalachian State University values and seeks to provide both opportunities for the free exchange of ideas and a safe and inclusive campus environment in which students, faculty and staff can be most productive in fulfillment of the university's mission; and

WHEREAS, Appalachian's fundamental mission is to discover, create, transmit, and apply knowledge to address the needs of individuals and society; and

WHEREAS, graduates should possess the knowledge, skills, and attitude that enable them to understand world cultures and events; analyze global systems; appreciate cultural differences; and apply this knowledge and appreciation to their lives as citizens and productive workers; and

WHEREAS, of all transforming and galvanizing forces, education has the greatest power to enlighten, empower, edify and equalize the members of a society; and

WHEREAS, human beings reveal and make themselves known to one another by infinite varieties of intelligence, language, race, values, politics, religion, national service, gender identity and expression, philosophies, life experiences, economic and educational backgrounds, geographical location, and a host of other characteristics; and

WHEREAS, composition of a student body that reflects differences in such characteristics is a critical element in Appalachian's approach to liberal arts education and extracurricular activities that inform students about their own cultures, values, thoughts and actions, and those of others; and

WHEREAS, Appalachian State University recognizes diversity among students and employees as an essential binding agent of its interdisciplinary approach to education, as well as to the greater life experience;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees acknowledges with appreciation the contributions made by underrepresented students that enrich the educational opportunities and experiences of all Appalachian students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees supports all efforts of students, faculty, staff and administrators to enhance safety of all students, employees and visitors, including, but not limited to, continuation of University Police Department efforts to engage in direct dialogue with students, Student Government Association efforts to facilitate dialogue among all students, and programs that help students and employees build communication skills and cultural competence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees encourages university administrators to take action, consistent with legal requirements, when necessary or appropriate to remedy the effects of harassment or other conduct that violates law or university policies and results in detrimental impact on academic programs, extracurricular activities and services offered by the university to all students.

ADOPTED by the Board of Trustees of Appalachian State University this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of September, 2016.

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Bradley T. Adcock, Chair

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James M. Barnes, Secretary

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