



Dear Members of the John Carroll University Community,

In a landmark decision earlier this week, the Supreme Court of the United States held that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 -- which prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of sex -- also prohibits an employer from discriminating on the basis of an employee's sexual orientation or gender identity. The University's current [Non-discrimination Policy](#) already prohibits such discrimination against all members of our campus community. We are heartened by the fact that the court's ruling on this very important issue aligns with the Ignatian ideal of honoring the inherent dignity of the human person.

This momentous occasion also serves as a reminder that there is still much work to be done. The month of June is celebrated around the world as Pride Month, a time when we are all invited to recognize and celebrate the dignity and full humanity of those who identify as LGBTQIA+. It is also a time when we, as a Jesuit, Catholic institution, have the opportunity to humbly recommit to our own mission-centered values of equity, inclusion, and respect for the whole person and do more to create a fully inclusive space.

This past fall, I called for the creation of an LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity working group, which I tasked to "examine, discuss, explore, highlight and recommend strategies,

initiatives, and programs to create a more robustly diverse and inclusive John Carroll, addressing inclusion of LGBTQIA+ members of our community.” Over the next several months, this group, consisting of 16 faculty, staff, and student representatives, under the leadership of Dr. Ed Peck, Vice President for University Mission and Identity, and Dr. Tiffany Galvin Green, Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, worked hard to develop a set of recommended action steps for JCU to become more fully attentive to and inclusive of the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community.

It feels serendipitous, if coincidental, that the results of the working group’s efforts are captured in [the attached report](#) available to our community this week. While acknowledging existing University efforts and commitments to the diversity, equity and inclusion, of the LGBTQIA+ community, the group identified additional action items for us to incorporate into those efforts. These items are incorporated as both short-term and long-term recommendations in the following 5 focus areas:

- Campus culture and the student experience
- Events programming and policy
- Outreach
- Individual support of students, staff, and faculty
- Institutional policy

The working group provided a comprehensive and balanced assessment of the current state of our University-wide efforts to improve the climate for LGBTQIA+ students, staff, faculty, and alumni. As suggested at the conclusion of the report, we will move forward with implementing as many of these recommendations that are both feasible and fiscally possible. I have charged our Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Dr. Tiffany Galvin Green, with the responsibility of monitoring our progress in the five areas identified in the report. It is important that we have accountability measures in place, and that most, if not all, of the working

group's recommendations fall in line with our University's Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence (SPIE).

As indicated in the SPIE, our commitment to a more welcoming climate for our LGBTQIA+ community cannot be the work of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion division alone. It will require the solidarity and dedication of our entire JCU community. As our University Diversity Statement says, "In keeping with our Jesuit mission of fostering inclusion, compassion, and respect, John Carroll University commits to a welcoming climate in which all can live more fully a 'faith that does justice' through genuine encounter, solidarity, and care for the whole person." As a University we must work together actively to welcome individuals of all identities and experiences, and ensure that we embrace the common humanity and dignity that unites us all.

Particularly in these current times, we are being called as an institution to ensure the just treatment of all members of our campus community. We are actively and collectively working to end all systemic injustices that have functioned to marginalize or to oppress people because of their identities. While there is no question that hate or discrimination will not be tolerated, we know that there are also systems at work beyond the obvious. We must actively interrogate the ways in which our policies and practices help or harm those who experience marginalization on a daily basis.

I am proud of the work of our LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity working group and I am confident that their work will help us continue to create a better JCU, committed to excellence in all dimensions so that everyone in our community will have the opportunity to thrive as their whole, authentic selves.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Johnson, Ph.D.
President, John Carroll University

LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity Working Group:

Tiffany Galvin Green, Ph.D (Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Co-chair)
Edward Peck, Ph.D. (Office of University Mission and Identity, Co-Chair)
Medora Barnes, Ph.D. (Department of Sociology; Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies Program)
Fr. James Bretzke, S.J., S.T.D. (Department of Theology and Religious Studies)
Lord Edwin "Eddie" Carreon (Office of Residence Life) - Through February 2020
Dana Funyak (Department of Athletics)
Autumn Franz (LGBTQIA+ Allies, student organization representative)
Gerald Guest, Ph.D. (Department of Art History)
Edward Hahnenberg, Ph.D. (Department of Theology and Religious Studies)
Thomas Kegler '21 (Undergraduate student representative)
Angela Krueger (Office of the Registrar)
Philip Metres, Ph.D. (Department of English and Peace, Justice and Human Rights)
Abigail Perrino '21G (Graduate student representative)
Salomón Rodezno (Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion)
Leah Vandine '20 (Student Government, DEI Committee representative)
Jeffrey Your (Department of Chemistry)



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