

Dear Members of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Community,

On the first day of Chanukah, we want to wish those of you who celebrate a Happy Chanukah. Unfortunately, in the month preceding Chanukah, three anti-Semitic incidents have rocked the country. Earlier in the month, staff at the Tony Sixth & I synagogue, which is in downtown Washington, D.C., discovered that someone had scrawled red swastikas on a staircase and had carved the word "JEW" into a door. More recently, someone broke into Nessah Synagogue, a Persian Jewish congregation located in Beverly Hills, California and desecrated several of the Torah scrolls and prayer books, as well as the building itself.

We are particularly disheartened and disgusted by the horrific shootings that took place at a kosher market in Jersey City, New Jersey on Tuesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, in which three people were killed as a result of an anti-Semitic attack:

- Moshe Deutsch, a 24-year-old Yeshiva student who was visiting from Williamsburg
- Mindy Ferencz, a 33-year-old, mother of four and wife of the supermarket owner, Moishe Ferencz, who had left the store briefly to go to the synagogue next door for afternoon, Mincha, prayer
- Douglas Miguel Rodriguez, a 49-year-old store employee, who was married with an 11-year-old daughter, who came to the US from Ecuador 3 years ago

The killers also shot and killed a fourth victim, Jersey City police detective Joseph Seals, which was a reflection of their hatred toward law enforcement. All four individuals lost their lives to hate driven violence. These acts of domestic terrorism perpetrated by individuals in these instances are orchestrated to instigate fear and deepen the divide present in our country today.

These recent anti-Semitic attacks are part of a growing increase in anti-Semitic attacks in the United States (US). The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) recorded 1,879 anti-Semitic incidents in the US in 2018, the third highest year on record since the ADL began tracking such data in the 1970s. The number of incidents in 2018 was a 99% increase versus 2015. Similarly, there has been a marked increase in anti-Semitism globally. According to the Kantor Center at Tel Aviv University, more Jews were killed in anti-Semitic violence around the world in 2018 than during any other year in decades. This has resulted in a sense of emergency among Jews in many countries, including in the US.

The members of the Diversity and Inclusion (DISC) reject anti-Semitism and hate in all forms and support actions that unify our community in kindness, acceptance, and compassion. We denounce all acts which result in members of our community feeling threatened or unsafe. It is our goal to strengthen an environment that embodies the values of empathy, unity, and support of all its individual members. We unequivocally condemn all acts of hate and violence. We encourage a climate in which differences

are appreciated and individuals are respected. At Emory and within our department, any contradictory action is unacceptable.

With Compassion and in Solidarity Against Anti-Semitism and All Hate Crimes,  
DISC Members



**DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**  
SUBCOMMITTEE