

# Who We Aspire to Be

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Today is [Human Rights Day](#), being celebrated around the world. It is “observed every year on 10 December — the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR). The UDHR is a milestone document that proclaims the inalienable rights which everyone is entitled to as a human being – regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”

Unfortunately, there are some in our world who seek to exclude many people from basic human rights. [On Tuesday in Boise, Idaho](#) the only memorial to Anne Frank in the United States was vandalized. Stickers with swastikas and the words “We are everywhere” were found affixed to different parts of the memorial. We cannot and will not allow Nazi cowards or other bigots to define who we are. Every time there is such an incident, we at FAU must stand up and speak out against it. By doing so, we will be in alignment with the Florida Board of Governors and with FAU’s President, as well as our own consciences.

In response to incidents of racial and ethnic violence and demonstrations of intolerance across the United States, the Florida Board of Governors established in June 2020 the SUS Workgroup on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (D.E.I.), led by Board of Governors’ Vice-Chair Brian Lamb. In an [October 22, 2020](#) memo, Brian Lamb, Chair, SUS Workgroup on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Vice Chair, Board of Governors and Marshall Criser, Chancellor of the State University System, stated that: “While acknowledging federal and state law, executive orders, and administrative guidance, the Board of Governors is making a clear and steadfast commitment to prioritize and support diversity, racial and gender equity, and inclusion in the State University System and to hold each university accountable for policies, programs, and actions that will codify and operationalize the System’s commitment. The Workgroup’s report was endorsed by the full Board at its [November 5th meeting](#).”

FAU President John Kelly has affirmed his personal and FAU’s institutional commitment to providing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment many times. [In a May 31, 2020](#) statement he noted that “Diversity and inclusion are part of Florida Atlantic University’s DNA.” On November 3, 2020, following a social media video that featured racist and offensive content, he sent a message to the entire FAU community in which he reiterated “how vital it is for us to come together in the face of hate and racism and to reaffirm our commitment to the long history of diversity and inclusion that sits at the heart of this great institution.”

The FAU Libraries have affirmed their commitment to providing a safe and welcoming environment for people of all backgrounds and all points of view. One of our [Strategic Goals](#) is to play a “leadership role in promoting diversity and inclusion for the Libraries’ patrons and staff.” To that end, over the past five years, we have developed programs, exhibits, and events to promote awareness of diversity and increase the acceptance and inclusion of everyone. Our efforts can be tracked on our [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion landing page](#).

Together, we must stand up to those who would divide us. Together, we must speak out against all acts of violence and intimidation. Together, we must model the people we aspire to be.