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TWEETS

FSU community unites in solidarity: students organize a protest in response to ongoing hate crimes

🕒 November 3, 2017 👤 Gatepost News Staff 📁 News, slider 💬 0



(Junior Iyla Driggs led a march across campus protesting the recent hate crimes that occurred at FSU. Photo by Allie Gath)



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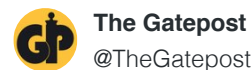
On Tuesday, Oct. 31, over 250 members of the FSU community participated in a campus-wide walkout protesting the hate crimes that occurred in Larned Hall.

During the walkout, marchers held signs with written statements such as "Listen to black women," "Respect women of color" and "White silence = Violence."

The primary organizer of the protests, junior Iyla Driggs, led the crowd throughout campus along with several other students.

While they marched, the protesters chanted phrases such as "What do we want? Justice. When do we want it? Now," "No racist police," "No justice, no peace," "Whose school? Our school."

Tweets by @TheGatepos



EDIT:
The Gatepost would like to extend their congratulations to the class of 2020. Especially to our senior members:
- Mackenzie Berube
-Thomas Maye
-Evan Lee
-Sara Senesac
-Liam Gambon
-Lauren Paolini
-Lizzy Stocks
-Abigail Saggio
Thank you all for the late Thursday nights!

May 25, 2020



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-Evan Lee
-Sara Senesac
-Liam Gambon
-Lauren Paolini
-Lizzy Stocks
-Abigail Saggio
Thank you all for the late Thursday nights and incredible articles!

May 24, 2020

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Whose streets? Our streets” and “Not in my house.”

Approximately 50 protesters met outside of the McCarthy Center at 12:05 p.m.

As they made their way down State Street to the Residence Life office, located in Corinne Hall Towers, more students, faculty and staff joined.

After they marched past Towers, the protesters briefly stopped outside of Larned Hall, the dorm where all three hate crimes occurred.

Senior Tasia Clemons said, “We’re making our voices heard. We’re right outside of Larned, so they’re going to hear us if that’s where they’re living.”

The group, which had grown to approximately 250 to 300 participants, marched by the Henry Whittemore Library and continued chanting phrases such as, “End racism,” “Black lives matter,” “White silence is violence” and “Money can’t equal justice” as they proceeded into Dwight Hall.

Dwight Hall holds many of the administrative offices on campus, including those of the president, vice presidents and provost.

After marching through Dwight Hall, the protesters exited through the front entrance and returned to the McCarthy Center. From there, they entered the building and chanted while passing FSUPD.

FSUPD declined to comment on the protest.

Jackson Stevens, a senior and BSU member who assisted Driggs with the march, said, “I think the thing that is going to be really successful about this protest is that last year when we did it, we listened to Campo – their suggestions. This year, we went through the residence halls, we went through the academic buildings – showing that we are not going to be silenced. We are going to do this until it’s fixed.”

The demonstrators headed back up Maynard Road and blocked

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traffic as they walked down State Street and Salem End Road, eventually looping back to West Hall.

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The protest concluded behind West Hall in Maynard Parking Lot at approximately 1:15 p.m.

Driggs said, "I didn't expect this turnout. I did this all by myself in the morning yesterday and told everyone to spread it by word of mouth – not on social media. It shows that we're all standing with BSU. We know this is not who we are at this school. We are fighting to end racism and the fight does not stop here."

Millie González, interim chief officer of diversity, inclusion and community engagement, said she thought the protest was "wonderful."

She said, "When I saw them marching, I went out there and marched with them. I think it's extremely healthy that they wanted to voice that this is their campus and they're not going to stand for racism on campus. ... We can't do anything without the students' help."

She added, "I honestly thought people were going to be protesting more earlier because I think this is an important sign that this is not acceptable."

Stevens said whoever wrote the racist remarks is a "coward" and the protest was meant to teach "the racist folks" that FSU will keep them accountable.

He added, "Keep your neighbors accountable. Keep your administrators and your faculty and your teachers accountable. Keep each other accountable, and that's what will solve this problem."

President F. Javier Cevallos was out of state during the protest, but remained informed about the events on campus via texts from Lorretta Holloway, vice president for enrollment and student development.

Cevallos said, "It's excellent to have students caring enough to organize this kind of event. ... I think that the important issue

really is that we can continue the conversation and continue talking about the issues that are happening.”

Holloway also marched during the protest.

She said, “I think this is a time for students to come together in the campus community.”

She added, “We heard from the open forum that people want action. They are tired of talking. A protest like this really gets people together and galvanized.”

The perpetrators of the hate crimes need to see the campus community is in support of the students who have been targets of the recent hate crimes, she said.

“All this stuff that is going on in society right now is happening on our campuses. We can’t pretend that we are in this little bubble and we’re in a school where everything is wonderful. ... It’s not 1957, 1967, it’s the kind of thing you wish wasn’t happening anymore, but it still does,” Holloway said.

Senior Ade Lasode said, “I think it’s amazing that so many people are out to support the cause because people don’t realize how it affects us – growing up and being black. I’m not even American! I hope now they do something.”

Senior Khalima Botus-Foster said, “I’m just glad that something of this magnitude is happening because usually we stay quiet about this sort of stuff, but now we’re not. Now, we’re about making people feel uncomfortable. We felt uncomfortable for 400 years, so it’s about time.”

Virginia Rutter, interim chair of the sociology department, said the recent events interfered with the well-being of students and they need all the support they can get.

“I think every single person should be here right now,” she added.

Senior Foreign Exchange Student Hee Jeong Chon said she’d heard of Black Lives Matter in Korea, but didn’t realize how

significant the movement was until she came to FSU.

"The first times the incident happened, I went to the forum because I've experienced racism, but no one was talking about Asians. I talked to my professor, Rachel Trousdale, and she made me realize minorities have different histories, so we have different problems. I will support them," she added.

Linda Vaden-Goad, provost and vice president for academic affairs said, "We don't want racism on our campus and we want to do everything we can to stop it."

Vaden-Goad said she thinks "it's wonderful" that the students organized the protest themselves. "I'm a child of the '60s," she added.

Junior Geena Witt said, "The campus is not doing its job, and they are not responding as they should be. This is violence toward our students."

Senior Genesis Guerrero said, "We want to send a message to the administration that hate crimes are not OK."

Rita P. Colucci, chief of staff and general counsel, said in an email that she chose to join the protest and walk because she wanted to show students the administration supports them.

She added, "What I hope our students know and understand is that we are all on the same side – but there is no quick fix to the ugliness of racism. I hope everyone that attended the protest – and observed it – will be motivated to roll up their sleeves to do the work that it will take to eradicate racism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia – and all of the other social ills that plague our society – from our campus. Only by coming together and working together, can we solve these issues."

Cevallos said protesting and "reclaiming the campus" is a good thing. He said he appreciates that both students and members of the administration felt strongly enough about this issue that they chose to march.

He added there is always a downside to protests. "The issue is

that there were students taking exams and classes – that’s a disturbance.”

Cevallos said he encourages students to keep everyone in mind when planning an activity like a protest.

He added, “Really be conscientious of where to go so that won’t interfere with students that are taking classes and exams. But other than that, I think everyone feels very strongly about this issue and certainly we want to make sure we find the culprits.”

Robert Krim, business professor, said in an email professors were not informed about the rally in advance. He said he heard marchers outside of his classrooms, stopped his lesson and started a discussion about the protest.

“I opened our classroom door so that students could join if they wanted to, and hear it, and photograph it if they wanted to do that, or just sit,” he added.

Krim referenced his Jewish heritage, saying, “In the 1930s, Jewish people in Germany had racial slurs written on their homes and on their rooms at colleges there, later they were driven out and killed.”

He said he believes it is important for all people to be “respected as a citizen and person.”

John Sherry, business professor, said in an email he did not have class during the time the protest was occurring, but would have canceled his class given the “spate of incidents.”

He added, “You just have to wonder as an FSU community how this person or persons can be shamed into stopping the racial antics.”

Sophomore Robert Johnson said, “I feel like this is more useful than the forums. It provides us a chance to amplify our voices more and maybe with all of the noise and disruption around campus, something will finally happen. ... It’s better to speak in unity than to have separate voices.”

Driggs said, "We are here together not only as students and the FSU family, but as citizens of the world to show that FSU does not tolerate racism. And there's no room for hate here or anywhere beyond our campus. We are here in peace to say no to violence and racism and to show the power and beauty of respectful dialogue.

Driggs called upon protestors to join her in "peaceful action, so that we can model what peace looks like for those who need to see it," said Driggs.

After a few other students spoke, Driggs concluded the walkout by saying, "Please go respectfully. Remember, you cannot fight hate with hate."



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