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Subject: Reconciliation

Hello Lawrence Students, Faculty and Staff,

Welcome back to campus! I hope you are settling in nicely to winter term. I am writing to share a few thoughts about an important aspect of our ongoing efforts to create a more inclusive Lawrence. It is the idea of reconciliation. As you might recall, in the fall we embarked upon the initiative, "Truth and Reconciliation at Lawrence: Enhancing trust, empathy and learning". We began our efforts with truth seeking. This included town hall meetings about the recent campus climate survey and sharing circles to better understand how people are currently experiencing our campus. The information gathered is in addition to ongoing efforts in truth seeking such as our bias reporting system and other processes for reporting various forms of discrimination.

Next week we will offer yet another opportunity to understand the truth about diversity and its impact from a historical perspective. We are hosting **the Stone of Hope, an exhibit about race in the Fox Cities, in the Warch Center, January 14-18 in the main gallery area on the third floor**. The display is well known in Appleton but our showing will have a unique addition. It will include supplemental information collected by our university archivist that examines the history of diversity, more broadly, on campus. If you are interested in the facts about diversity at Lawrence and in Appleton you should take some time to view the exhibit when you are in the campus center next week.

Although truth seeking is a perpetual activity in a liberal arts college and conservatory, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion will be turning its focus to the process of reconciliation during the winter and spring term. Reconciliation is generally described as a process of bringing opposing ideas or groups together in a way that illuminates the common truths to be found in desperate experiences. This common ground can subsequently serve as the basis upon which an amicable, mutually beneficial relationship can be had. In the context of restorative justice, and more specifically truth and reconciliation at Lawrence, building on our powerful sense of community, reconciliation becomes a way to address the inequities identified in the process of truth seeking. It also facilitates the healing that needs to occur following individual and institutional trauma that results from the disruption associated with the exposure of painful truths.

A skill central to reconciliation is conflict resolution. So in order to increase our capacity to promote reconciliation, Lawrence will provide a two-part workshop entitled, **Navigating Conflict on the Journey Toward Reconciliation on February 8, from 9 am - 5 pm in the Warch Campus Center Esch Studio (room 224)**. Faculty, staff and students are invited to attend. This interactive workshop will provide skills for understanding and working through conflicts. Participants are invited to attend either the full workshop from 9-5 or just the morning portion from 9-12. The morning session will provide some introductory skills for navigating conflicts and handling tense moments in conversations around identity. The afternoon will

provide an opportunity for further learning around understanding and navigating conflict situations including those that impact an entire community. Anyone looking for substantial skill building about deescalating conflict should plan to attend the full 8 hours. The Sustained Dialogue Institute will facilitate the training. For additional information or to register to attend contact Emily Wilson, emily.r.wilson@lawrence.edu.

Conflict is inevitable in an environment where there is diversity, learning, growth and positive change. Given that we live in a time of fast-paced change conflict resolution is a skill essential to our collective and individual happiness. Consequently it is a critical competency for success, personally and professionally. Visit the Office of Diversity and Inclusion website for additional opportunities to develop this and other cultural competencies <https://www.lawrence.edu/info/offices/diversity-and-inclusion>.

In closing, I would like to encourage you to take part in a Lawrence University tradition, the **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service** honoring the legacy of Reverend King which includes both non-violent disruption and reconciliation. This year's event takes place on January 21. For details regarding the day's activities follow this link: <http://www.lawrence.edu/students/volunteer/mlk/>.

Best wishes for a successful term!

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