Dear Lyman Briggs Community Members,

Soon we will be starting the fall semester, occupied with new courses, new friends, and new experiences, with all the accompanying excitement and stresses. This fall, many of us are feeling the extra weight brought by recent events at and near the University of Virginia, in Charlottesville. There, avowed racists and Nazis marched on the campus with torches shouting slogans of hate and oppression. The following day, as we all know, brought more marching, yelling, violence, and horribly, the murder of an innocent counter-protester. These events have shocked and upset all of us, and their occurrence in a university community not unlike our own has a sickening resonance. Be assured that on this university campus, and in Lyman Briggs College, we reject and condemn racism and anyone who adheres to it. We denounce the brutality and bigotry that occurred in Virginia and the twisted ideology of white supremacy that led to it.

Last year, Lyman Briggs approved a new statement of inclusion that will hang on the wall in every classroom alongside the honor code. The statement reads:

Lyman Briggs College is dedicated to promoting inclusion and fostering diversity in all of its forms. We will treat all community members with respect, civility, and empathy. We embrace learning environments that celebrate different beliefs, practices, and lives. We believe that inclusive learning is stronger learning and diverse workplaces are stronger workplaces. Thank you for contributing to this mission. You belong here.

As a learning community, we take inclusivity and diversity as core values. We do so out of a commitment to justice, equity and out of a belief that our many differences make us wiser and stronger. We vehemently reject any efforts to oppress, belittle, intimidate, or harass members of our community. We utterly reject the white supremacistism, racism, and antisemitism that infected Charlottesville this week. As a public institution, we recognize that there are constitutionally protected speech rights, even for hate groups. The law cannot always shield us from speech that is insulting, hurtful, or malignant. But we will loudly and proudly counter hate by declaring our values and protecting our community members.

The faculty and staff of Lyman Briggs are here as resources, and anyone needing support is encouraged to reach out. Below are some further resources you may find useful:

- LBC committee for inclusion website
- President Simon’s letter on inclusion
- OIII website
- LBGT resource center
- Counseling center
- Office of Cultural and Academic Transitions

Signed,
The LBC Committee on Inclusivity