Building an Activist Toolkit: Advice and Learning From Once Reluctant Student Activists

Liliana Delgado Peyton Hamel



About Me

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she/her

Major: Genetics and English

Position in the University: Assistant Opinion Editor for the *Iowa State Daily*

About Me

Liliana Delgado

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Major: Math

Minor: Physics

Position in the University: Community Advisor



What Can I Do to Improve 2. or keep map in there to wife it up?

3. snacks in the den

4. nalloween decorations. ues





Some of you may know that I work at a Community Advisor (RA) at Iowa State University. The house I am a CA for is called "Bean".

On September 4, 2019, around 3 pm, a group of residents took letters from their house sign and adhered them to the wall on the Bean sign to spell the slur "Beaner".

For those who do not know. Beaner is a derogatory racist slur that targets Mexican people. In case you did not know I am Mexican-American.

I as well as some of my residents were targets of this hateful and offensive vandalism.

Following this incident, I had a brief meeting with a superior and the CA of the suspected residents. We decided to call an emergency house meetings for both houses that night. We addressed the incident and asked anyone to offer information.

That was basically all that was done regarding the first incident. Nobody from the Department of Residence (DOR) or any other campus office reached out to me or the affected residents following this incident.

At some point the night of September 18, 2019, a sign that was previously posted on my house had the words "More Beaners!!!" written on it. ISUPD was called this time. Two officers responded and had suggested that the slur was somehow a nickname we had given ourselves and that there was not much they could do. As the CA of this house, I can assure with great certainty that this is not a nickname we gave ourselves. Suggesting this vandalism is merely a joke or unoffensive downplays the impact this word has and its harm.





Liliana Delgado October 19, 2019 · 28

After this incident and several follow up conversations with my direct superiors, nobody from any office on campus reached out to me. On the evening of September 20. I decided to email a higher up in the department my concerns and frustrations. Because this happened twice my safety started to feel even more in jeopardy than the first time. I feel like I was being targetted.

The following Monday I met with two higher-ups in the department. I expressed my concerns and we talked about some steps moving forward. I asked them to send an email to my house letting them know they are aware and doing what they can. That was done later that week, I also asked them to send an email to the other house that was suspected of doing these, letting those residents know that the DOR is very aware. That has still not happened. I also asked for some sort of bias incident training to happen in my building. To which the response was they would have to think about it. The Office of Equal Opportunity or the Campus Climate Response Team failed to connect with me after the incidences they said they were going to follow up with some people but I still have vet to hear from either of those teams or the people I met with about the follow-up.

Earlier this week I was informed that several people have gone through the University conduct process regarding these incidences however, they are still allowed to live in my building.

Yesterday October 18, marks one month since the incidences. Almost none of the follow-up I requested has been done and I have not been communicated with since the meeting on September 23. I was invited to meet with the people I did the first time earlier this week. I believe this invitation only occurred because someone else in the department learned about the events that happened in my









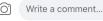
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Every day I fear for my safety and the safety of my residents. I do not know if two vandalisms were the end or only the beginning. Every time I walk into my house I am searching for another vandalism. I walk around campus with the fear it will happen somewhere else.

I am posting this to express my frustration and disappointment with how this situation has been handled with all departments at Iowa State University. I feel that not enough has been done and that I have not been given the support and resources I need.

























Students Against Racism

- Protest
- List of demands
- Two meetings with university administration
- Town hall
- Group organization
- Facebook:ISU Students Against Racism



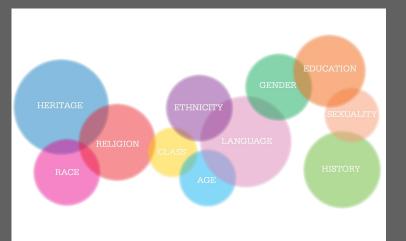
Things I Have Learned

- At the time I had not realized what I did was activism
- Learning to say no
- Who are your real allies?
- People will talk about your experience as if they were there
- There are those who want to support you and those who want to hurt you

My Advice for You

- Your safety should always be a priority
- Understand how exhausting but rewarding this work is
- Unapologetically rely on your support system
- Do this work at your own pace
- Make people uncomfortable

What Makes You an Activist?





Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead, US anthropologist (1901 – 1978)





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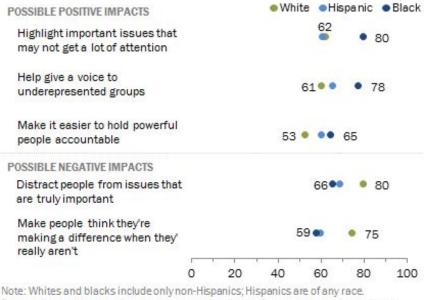
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Eight-in-ten blacks say social media help shed light on rarely discussed issues; the same share of whites say these sites distract from more important issues

% of U.S. adults who say the following statements describe social media very or somewhat well



Respondents who gave other responses or who did not give an answer are not shown. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 29-June 11, 2018.

"Activism in the Social Media Age"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Hamel: Take a stand against racism on campus

By Peyton Hamel, peyton.hamel@iowastatedaily.com Nov 12, 2019 💂 1





Columnist Peyton Hamel argues for change following several reports of racism on college campuses, including lowa State's. Hamel calls for lowa State students to stand up to racism to improve the quality of students' lives.

Makayla Tendall/Iowa State Daily

Editor's note: This article previously stated that Student Government hosted the Students Against Racism summit on Oct.30. This is incorrect as they just attended the summit. The Daily regrets this error.

As of Monday, Iowa State University students were banned from using chalk due to continual racist slander scrawled all over the sidewalks on campus. A prohibition such as this has never before occurred in the history of our beloved university.



Here are a few examples of the most derogatory incidents in 2019:



Four white students at Colorado State in blackface

Black doll hung from shower rod at Eastern Michigan University



Toilet paper noose hung on a dormitory door at Michigan State

Race-related arson at University of La Verne in California

These incidents range from disrespecting heritage to hate crimes.

2019 school year at

Iowa State, Whethe ...



Poems submitted to Voices

Feb 19, 2019 🔑 1

DIVERSITY

Have you considered the decaf? I mean, really, you're declaring that the white supremacists are taking over because a couple people chalked some racist stuff on campus? Get a grip.

There are maybe 5000 white supremacists in an American population of 330 million, about one in 66,000 people. They are not taking over America. They are not taking over ISU. The only place they are taking over is your imagination.

Oh good lord, snowflake, get over yourself

The Daily Dumpster...

This post is disgusting lol







How Can You Use Your Status To Advocate?



Thanks for coming!

•••

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Sources

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