

BFA Statement on the Criminal Act of antiBlack Racist Terrorism against Dr. Charles Becknell, Jr. and the Program of Africana Studies.

The University of New Mexico Black Faculty Alliance (BFA) stands together with the UNM Division for Equity and Inclusion and others united in opposition to antiBlack racism, white supremacy, and racist actions in any form. We condemn the criminal act of domestic antiBlack terrorism that includes the threat of a lynching directed toward Dr. Charles Becknell, Jr. and his family. Dr. Becknell, Jr. is the Director of the Africana Studies program in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of New Mexico.

As reported in the Albuquerque Journal (April 30, 2020), “these acts included two separate special event request forms submitted just after midnight on Thursday, April 30, as well as separate email and Facebook postings. In the “name of event” line, the anonymous applicant wrote “Ku Klux Klan Lynching”; the location of the event was listed as “Charles Becknell’s house,” with the date of the event listed as May 4, 2020, and the estimated attendance at “666.” In the “notes” line, “Kill all (N-word)” was written. In a second form, under “organization/department” making the special event request, the applicant listed “(N-word) killers,” the same designation listed as the applicant’s contact name.” The Albuquerque NAACP has demanded an FBI investigation and we agree with this appeal.

The BFA vehemently denounces the toleration of racism and supports a survivor-based approach to addressing all criminal acts of antiBlack terrorism, as these acts constitute human rights violations at both the individual and institutional levels. Dr. Charles Becknell, Jr. was threatened with lynching, the Program of Africana Studies was also threatened, and by consequence, the safety and welfare of Black faculty has also been compromised. In response, the BFA calls for the following four-point plan to address the safety and protection of the survivor (Dr. Becknell, Jr. and his family), the Africana Studies program, and the UNM Black faculty:

- 1) Continual police protection for Dr. Becknell, Jr. and his family;
- 2) Increased campus security for the Program of Africana Studies and facilities;
- 3) For the University of New Mexico, College of Arts and Sciences, and other units on campus to publicly condemn these antiBlack racist acts; and
- 4) The creation of a taskforce to develop a survivor-focused approach for an emergency response to hate-based threats against UNM Black faculty and a truth-telling commission to document systems and behaviors that create

and sustain antiBlack racism, white supremacy, and racist assaults in any form.

We look forward to partnering with the University of New Mexico, the Albuquerque Chapter of the NAACP, the FBI, and the Albuquerque Police Department to achieve this end.