October 29, 2018

Dear Einstein Community:

When I began formulating ideas for my first dean’s letter, which I will send tomorrow, I didn’t expect to preview that communication by writing about the national tragedies that have shaken our nation in recent days.

The profound sense of sadness, loss and outrage associated with these events—ranging from gun violence to bomb threats; often motivated by religious or racial hatred—is beyond comprehension. And given Einstein’s own history of combatting anti-Semitism and providing opportunities for Jewish and other students and faculty members who were once denied access to top medical schools, the killings that took place at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh are heartbreaking. What’s also terribly disconcerting is that this event comes after similarly hate-fueled tragedies such as the racially-based Charleston Church shooting, and the failed attempt this weekend at the First Baptist Church in Jeffersontown, Kentucky that led to the shooter killing two individuals at a nearby convenience store.

In the midst of such overwhelming tragedy, we should all be reminded of Einstein’s core mission, which when you boil it down, is about the preservation and sanctity of life. We pursue research to help treat and cure disease. We educate doctors who strive to improve the health and well-being of their patients, regardless of background or life circumstances. It’s a noble and vital mission, especially in today’s world.

It’s also one from which we can all draw strength during these challenging times.

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