

Reaffirm there's no racism or hate in Greensboro

Thursday, August 27, 2009

The National Socialist Movement (neo-Nazis) has chosen to hold its regional conference in Greensboro this week. A coalition of religious, business, government and community leaders committed to values of respect and inclusion met to discuss the appropriate response to a conference dedicated to spreading the ideas of hatred and exclusion.

We have a simple and unequivocal answer: Greensboro has no room for hate in our town! The strength and richness of our community is in its diversity. We are proud to hail from a Greensboro that is home to people from diverse religions, races, sexual orientations, national origins, economic and social classes, ages and physical characteristics and disabilities. We are proud to hail from a Greensboro that has multiple organizations, leaders and residents committed to working on issues of inequality, injustice and racism. We are proud to hail from a Greensboro that knows that it must stand up and speak out when hate comes to our town.

We urge all people who object to messages and actions of bigotry and racism to stand with us as we express our reaffirmation to justice and respect for all. We encourage you to join us by wearing a multicolored ribbon this weekend as a public witness for unity, inclusion and equity. Faith leaders in our community have already pledged to lead the campaign by handing out ribbons to congregants at this weekend's services. We encourage you to ask your clergy and religious institutions to join in these efforts. We also ask local businesses, government agencies and civic organizations to foster conversations and actions that promote inclusion and diversity, including joining the unity ribbon campaign.

We ask each and everyone to speak out and lend your voice to a thunderous chorus for justice. Visit our Web page, nccjriad.org/resolution, to take a stand and add your name to the important resolution below:

No Hate in Our Town

"In response to the National Socialist Movement (neo-Nazi) conference in our city, we the undersigned reaffirm our absolute commitment to continuing our community's efforts to build a Greensboro free of bias, bigotry and racism.

"We encourage all people to signify their commitment to building bridges of understanding by wearing a multicolored unity ribbon beginning this weekend. Together, we will build a community that is safe, just, inclusive and respectful of all."

Susan Feit is executive director of the National Conference for Community and Justice. Anthony Wade is human relations director for the city of Greensboro.