

January 30, 2017

To the Members of the Manhattan College Community,

I write to you from the annual conference of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) – which this year is focused on the theme "Inclusion on Campus: Exploring Diversity as an Expression of God's Grandeur" – to call your attention to the statement, below, issued today by the Board of Directors of ACCU in response to the executive order on immigration recently issued by the president.

In addition, I wanted to assure the community that we have been in communication with members of our community who might be affected by the executive order, offering advice and support.

The ACCU statement:

As the voice of Catholic higher education, the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities expresses its strong opposition to the Executive Order signed by President Donald J. Trump concerning U.S. immigration policy. We stand in solidarity with other Catholic and higher education organizations that recognize the moral obligation of our country to assist migrants, particularly those who are fleeing any kind of persecution.

In referring to the order's halt of refugee admissions, Bishop Joe S. Vásquez of Austin, Texas, chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, stated, "We believe that now more than ever, welcoming newcomers and refugees is an act of love and hope. ... We will work vigorously to ensure that refugees are humanely welcomed in collaboration with Catholic Charities, without sacrificing our security or our core values as Americans, and to ensure that families may be reunified with their loved ones." ([Read Bishop Vasquez's full statement online.](#))

[Pope Francis has said](#) that "authentic hospitality is our greatest security against hateful acts of terrorism." As ACCU [gathers this weekend in Washington, DC](#) to celebrate the value of diversity within Catholic higher education, we reaffirm the commitment of our institutions to creating inclusive, welcoming campus environments that embrace people of all faiths and cultures. Catholic higher education was founded precisely to serve the children of Catholic immigrants who in their own time were excluded from higher education. This is a legacy that we proudly pledge to continue.

Brennan O'Donnell, Ph.D.

President

