

To: All U.Va. Students
From: Allen W. Groves, Associate Vice President and Dean of Students (awg8vd@virginia.edu)
Subject: [Statement on April 4 Bias-Motivated Assault](#)

Members of the University of Virginia community:

Early Saturday morning, April 4, at approximately 3 a.m. in the Stadium Road area, a U.Va. student and his guest were violently assaulted, without warning, by five males described by the victim as Caucasians between the ages of 16 and 20. The attackers uttered several homophobic slurs immediately prior to and during the attack. The attackers smashed the victim's cell phone when he tried to call 911 for help. University Police units responded when the student's guest was able to flee and call for help. Because the attack was initially thought to have occurred off Grounds, the Charlottesville Police took on responsibility for investigating it and have been in regular communication with UPD Chief Mike Gibson since. Today, when the student visited the crime scene with CPD investigators, it was discovered that the crime appears to have taken place on Grounds and UPD has now taken over the investigation.

Based upon the facts as we currently know them, we believe this to be a bias-motivated crime, in that the perceived sexual orientation of the two victims appears to have motivated the assault. The U.Va. victim's Resident Advisor provided immediate support, and I informed the Resident Advisor on Saturday that I was available to meet with the student at the first opportunity, providing my cell phone number and offering to come to his residence hall Saturday afternoon. The Dean-on-Call also offered immediate assistance. When I ultimately did meet with the student, I offered the full support of the Office of the Dean of Students and the Division of Student Affairs. I also understand that his friends in the University community have provided important support throughout. Please know that we have been very careful throughout this process to protect the victims' identities and privacy.

Any crime perpetrated on a University student is one too many. However, a crime such as this, motivated as it appears by the victims' perceived sexual orientation, or one motivated by a victim's race, color, age, national origin, gender, disability, religion, ethnicity, or other protected characteristic, is particularly repugnant and deserving of swift condemnation. There is no place for crimes of hate at the University or in the surrounding Charlottesville community. Please know that we will do all that we can to apprehend and punish those responsible. I also encourage students to utilize our Just-Report-It system (accessible on the Dean of Students Web page, www.virginia.edu/deanofstudents) to alert us to any bias-motivated incidents that may occur.

On Thursday evening, several student organizations will be holding a forum and a demonstration of community support in the McIntire Amphitheater at approximately 6:30 p.m. to review this incident. Thereafter, at 8 p.m., a discussion session will take place in the Kaleidoscope room in Newcomb Hall. All interested members of the community are invited to attend. I will be available to speak with you at both events. You may also e-mail me at allengroves@virginia.edu.

Allen W. Groves
Dean of Students