

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN

February 18, 2018

Dear RISD Community,

Two weeks ago, a gunman took many young lives at a school shooting in Parkland, Florida. Since then we have seen the students of our nation, including those in the RISD community who have been working on this issue for a long time, galvanize around the refrain "#NeverAgain." This movement demands legislation to end policies that stand counter to the prevention of these acts of violence, incidences that have become outrageously all too common in our country.

This issue is of utmost importance to RISD. Our first priority is to provide a healthy, safe, and supportive environment—an environment in which our students can engage in deep learning, inquiry, and discourse without fear of violence or terror.

Tonight, I want to invite you to join a discussion at 7:00 p.m. in Carr Haus spearheaded by Nina Gregg '20 ID who attended Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, and knew two of the victims. The discussion will focus on the preparation of a community-wide panel in March about how we can make RISD a safer campus and prevent gun violence as a nation. This future event will include local politicians, RISD Public Safety, the Center for Student Involvement, Counseling and Psychological Services, among many others.

In addition, Public Safety will hold two ALICE (Alert, Lock-down, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate) active shooter response training sessions for students on Saturday, March 10 and Saturday, March 24 from 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. More information about location and how to register is forthcoming. We are also in discussion about holding these open sessions on a more regular basis as we strive to further empower our community.

I also want to acknowledge that RISD is dedicated to educating socially-conscious students that engage fully in the world and strive to create public good. In the coming weeks, several marches and national campus walk-outs have been planned in response to growing gun violence. I would urge faculty to speak to your students to see if class times can be arranged that might allow students who would like to engage in these staged walk outs to do so without penalty. RISD is also making it clear to our prospective students that if any applicant is suspended in high school for participating in these events it will not be a factor in our admission decision.

I thank the RISD community for coming together, supporting each other, and affirming our values.

Sincerely,



Rosanne Somerson
President



Two College Street
Providence, RI 02903-2784 USA

president@risd.edu
+1 401 454 6764