

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
GRADUATE COLLEGE of SOCIAL WORK

Statement on the Mass Shooting in Orlando

With sadness in our hearts for the lives lost and the scores of families and friends left with unbearable grief, we condemn the hate crime in Orlando targeting the LGBTQ community in the strongest possible terms. As social workers, we believe in the inherent value, dignity, and worth of all people. Thus, we wholly reject and stand against hatred towards any group, the kind of hatred at the root of the heinous act in Orlando and the many other acts of violence throughout our country and our world.

As Dean of the Graduate College of Social Work and a member of the LGBTQ community, this tragedy impacts me from a very personal place. But every act of gun violence is senseless and tragic and every life lost is a life lost too soon. The LGBTQ community is strong and resilient, and I know that our community and the community of Orlando will heal. The outpouring of love and support has been tremendous. But in addition to that support, what our communities and our country need are policy changes to prevent acts of violence.

The GCSW is committed to achieving social, racial, economic, and political justice for all. More than ever, we are, and must be, steadfast in our commitment. We know that love is stronger than hate just as we know that we must speak out and provide leadership at any and every opportunity to show the world what we know to be true. Furthermore, we believe our differences make us stronger. Our differences must be embraced. Our differences must be celebrated.

Love will win.

Alan Dettlaff, PhD

Dean and Maconda Brown O'Connor Endowed Dean's Chair

