Statement from Lane Community College President Mary Spilde to the Community

January 31, 2017

Good Morning Lane Colleagues,

Like many of you I have been dismayed and disappointed over the Presidential Executive Orders issued last week, particularly because of the impact on our students. These Orders were not processed or implemented in an orderly way causing a great deal of uncertainty, anxiety and extreme hardship for immigrants and refugees. The situation remains very fluid but along with our colleagues in our national associations we are monitoring events very carefully.

This kind of action does not align with the core values Lane lives by. It conflicts with the board policy on non-discrimination. I simply want to reaffirm our commitment to these values and policies and state that now, more than ever, we are unwavering in our commitment to equity and inclusion and to our students – all of our students. Lane is strengthened and enriched by the insights and culture brought by our international students and others. As educators we must stand for the broader purposes of higher education and our community college mission.

We have four international students from one of the affected countries. We have many more who are refugees or residents who attend Lane and are impacted. We are reaching out to these students, listening and responding as we can. Our IESL and International Programs staff have been proactive in arranging activities to support students.

Of course, the impact of such reckless Orders goes far beyond these students. As Dr. Martin Luther King said: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere ... Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

For example, our Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students are still in limbo. Next week the board of education will take up a resolution on this matter that was deferred from an earlier meeting because of the snow storm. I expect the board to take a stand on behalf of our students.

I will keep you apprised of these issues as we learn more. For now, I ask that you reach out to one another and our students with compassion, caring and empathy. Let our students know we welcome them and we are glad they are part of our community.

Mary