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White nationalist group not welcome on campus: University of Toronto

Group called the Canadian Nationalist Party set up a Facebook page promoting a gathering on campus

The Canadian Press Posted: Aug 16, 2017 12:54 PM ET | Last Updated: Aug 16, 2017 12:54 PM ET



University of Toronto president, Marc Gertler, said bigotry, hate and violence have no place campus. (Katherine Holland/CBC)

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The University of Toronto has told a white nationalist group they are not welcome to hold a rally on campus.

The group -- called the Canadian Nationalist Party -- has set up a Facebook page promoting a gathering on campus in September to discuss the nationalist movement in Canada and the future of the country.

"We have contacted the group to let them know they don't have permission to use our space," said university spokeswoman Althea Blackburn-Evans on Wednesday.

The university's president, Marc Gertler, said bigotry, hate and violence have no place campus and condemned the deadly clash between protesters and white supremacists in Virginia over the weekend that left one woman dead and 19 others injured.

"As we prepare to welcome students, faculty and staff to our campuses for the start of another academic year, it is important that we reaffirm our collective and unwavering commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion," Gertler said.

He said those values "are cornerstones of outstanding scholarship, teaching, and learning, which can thrive only by

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embracing the broadest range of people and encouraging the free expression of diverse perspectives in an atmosphere of mutual respect."

The events in Virginia are an important reminder to speak out against acts of violence, he said.

Heather Heyer, 32, died after a car slammed into a crowd of people protesting a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Va., on Saturday.

James Fields Jr., described as an admirer of Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany, has been charged with second-degree murder in Heyer's death. A memorial service was taking place Wednesday in Charlottesville for Heyer.

"The academic community must continue to condemn acts of violence, intimidation, and the fostering of hate," Gertler said in his statement, which didn't mention the Toronto rally directly.

The university said the group has not requested to book space at the campus. The school said they have reached out to Facebook to pull the event page down, although it still existed as of Wednesday morning.

The group did not respond to a request for comment.

The rally is scheduled to take place on Sept. 14, according to that online posting, which sparked a backlash on social media.


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