Message From The Chair

I would like to echo the [statement][1] sent by AAS President Christine Jones on behalf of the AAS council released on November 18 by copying it below.

As President of the American Astronomical Society, I wish to remind members and other stakeholders of the Society's resolute commitment to promote inclusiveness. In keeping with the AAS Council's recent adoption of a comprehensive [code of ethics][2], it is the responsibility of each of us to treat every member of our Society -- and every member of society more generally -- with respect and dignity, regardless of race, ethnicity, skin color, national origin, age, disability, religion, faith, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or political opinions. I expressed similar sentiments in my last President's Column [3], but they bear repeating in the aftermath of a polarizing national election that has been followed by a growing number of cruel incidents.

We must all be committed to ensuring an astronomy community that is safe and welcoming for all people, especially those who are currently underrepresented in our science and/or marginalized by society at large. I urge all AAS members to be mindful of how we treat each other and to support students and colleagues, especially those who may now feel threatened or frightened by recently reported acts of harassment, intimidation, and violence against people of color, women of all backgrounds, immigrants of all statuses, Jews, Muslims, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ persons, and those at the intersections of these axes. I am especially troubled by hateful acts occurring on the campuses of educational institutions.

Finally, as our colleagues in the American Geophysical Union (AGU) frequently point out, science plays a central role in America's security, economy, and well-being. Let's do our part to ensure that science continues to make our country more secure, more prosperous, and more comfortable -- for everyone.

-- President Christine Jones for the AAS Council

I think we can do two things: reach out to our colleagues who may feel threatened or unsafe and offer them our support and empathy. And continue to pursue our scientific endeavors for the benefit of everyone in the world.

--Lucy McFadden, DPS Chair