Dear Gallaudet community,

The University administration and LGBTQA Resource Center have been made aware of reports of missing exterior bathroom signage in Hall Memorial Building. At this time, it is unknown whether the missing signage is due to acts of vandalism. A report has been made to the Department of Public Safety, which is investigating this matter. A previous report made to the Department of Public Safety also noted missing exterior bathroom signage in the basement of Fowler Hall; again, it is unknown, pending further investigation, whether this is the result of an act of vandalism. It should be noted that in both instances the signs removed were those that signified the bathrooms in question as gender-inclusive.

Pending further information, these matters are under investigation. Any individuals with additional information are encouraged to report to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) by emailing dps@gallaudet.edu or calling 202-651-5444.

As our community is aware, bias-related harassment, and further threats, intimidation, and/or bullying are prohibited in the Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, willful destruction of property is prohibited as outlined in the Student Handbook and other university policies. Should the removal of this signage be found to be intentional, and found to be the work of a single or group of individuals with malicious or willful intent, the offending persons can expect to be appropriately disciplined.

The Gallaudet University LGBTQA Resource Center is working with university administrators to determine next steps in addressing this matter, pending investigation that may uncover additional information. The LGBTQA Resource Center remains steadfast in its mission to inform and educate our campus about the role of gender-inclusive restrooms and their importance in promoting safety and inclusion for all members of our campus community, including those who are transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming.

The Office of Student Affairs and Academic Support reminds Gallaudet University students, staff, and faculty members that the University’s anti-discrimination policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression. Furthermore, under the protection of Title IX, transgender individuals have a right to be treated according to their gender identity, which includes a right to access restrooms consistent with their gender identity. As stated in our University Student Handbook, we all share a commitment to and responsibility for "creating and maintaining a living and learning environment free from all forms of harassment, exploitation, intimidation, and/or violence." This is further underscored by the

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provisions of the DC Human Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity and gender expression in housing, employment, public accommodations, and educational institutions in Washington, D.C.

A longstanding issue with a concerning spike as of late, the recent nationwide spate of murders of transgender women, particularly women of color, is deeply alarming. These are trying times for many in our own community. It is more essential than ever to build upon the bedrock of civility, courtesy, and respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every member of our community. As Gallaudet University President Cordano emphasized in her State of the University address earlier this fall, each and every member of our herd (of Bison) is essential to the health and success of our University. No one is dispensable.

We recognize that these events and this message may bring up a variety of feelings, questions, and concerns. Faculty, staff members, and students that want to support all members of our community, including those who are transgender, non-binary, and gender-nonconforming, are encouraged to read the following FAQ on trans students and restrooms, which addresses common questions individuals may have about restroom access. Suggested additional resources include the following:

- **FAQ on the Withdrawal of Federal Guidance on Transgender Students**, compiled by the National Center for Transgender Equality.
- "**How Colleges Can Still Legally Protect Trans Students**,"
- **Schools in Transition**, a practical guide to help schools create safe and supportive environments for transgender students.
- NCTE and GLSEN’s **Model School District Policy**, which includes policies on a range of issues affecting transgender students.

Members of the campus community with further questions may contact Dr. Cara Miller, LGBTQA Resource Center Coordinator. Support for students is available from Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Additional support for students, as well as employees, is available in the Office of Diversity and Equity for Students (ODES) and the Office of the Ombuds. Additional Title IX-related inquiries may be directed to Sharrell McCaskill, Title IX Coordinator. Again, any individuals with further information that may aid in the investigation detailed above are asked to report directly to the Department of Public Safety.

Sincerely Yours,

Cara A. Miller, Ph.D.
Coordinator, LGBTQA Resource Center