

*An address by Graduate School Dean David Kieda detailing the University of Utah's support and ongoing commitment to our international students, faculty and staff. The address was delivered on behalf of the University of Utah at the ASUU rally on International Student Immigration and Visa Policies, coordinated with more than 50 major Universities around the nation.*

*February 9, 2017*

I'm Dave Kieda, and I'm the Dean of the Graduate School. I want to thank the ASUU, and members of our International Student body for extending an invitation today to highlight the key role that our international students, faculty and staff play in the life of the University. You will hear individual stories of the impacts of recent and pending changes to US immigration and visa policies on our students and families. My aim is to focus on the depth and breadth of the contributions that international students have made to our University. In reaffirming your place within our University community, I am also here to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to support and assist you, and advocate for your success.

International students strongly support the core mission of the University of Utah, which is: To serve the people of Utah and the world through the discovery, creation, and application of knowledge. Students and faculty from around the world have been involved in the development of new, more effective medicines and cancer therapies at the U, design of energy efficient vehicles and living communities, and discoveries of the fundamental structure of space and time. International students and faculty contribute to the cultural heritage of our University through their unique contributions to music, art and dance. Refugees from Somalia, Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Sudan, and immigrants from Mexico, Dominican Republic, and Cuba have joined our Utah community as University students, faculty and staff. Some of these individuals now serve as leaders of public education and social work in Utah, giving generously back to the nation and University which welcomed them. In short, you are integral members of our University community.

The core values of our University are founded in the open exchange of people and ideas. The diversity of experience brought by free exchange of scholars from around the world leads to new insights, sparks challenges to conventional wisdom, and fuels new, creative approaches to solve problems of common interest. The University's Moran Eye center fosters exchanges of doctors and academics from around the world to promote surgical techniques that improve vision for thousands of common citizens in Nepal, Iran and Ghana. The University's US-Pakistan

Center for Advanced Studies in Water has partnered with the Pakistani government and Universities to develop comprehensive strategies for the distribution of water, improving the life and health of the citizens of their country. The participation of students and faculty in international conferences and exchanges allows our discoveries and research to improve health and living conditions around the world, and here in Utah.

Restrictions on the freedom of academic and cultural exchange limit our ability to carry out our university mission, and distract our capacity to employ creativity, hard work, and dedication to bring innovative solutions to the pressing needs of modern society. I have personally seen the impacts of immigration restrictions on my postdoctoral research associate in astrophysics from Iran, who worked in my research group starting in early 2012. Visa restrictions forced her to be continually separated from her family and new husband for most of three years. Despite being a key researcher in the field of high energy astrophysics, travel limitations frustrated her ability to present invited talks at international conferences on her breakthrough results.

As members of the academic community, we all know the path to discovery and lasting knowledge is not easy. We spend years immersed in extensive study and preparation, and many years in the research lab developing new ideas and approaches that may only lead to short-term setbacks. True progress in any endeavor is accomplished through attention to the small details, without losing sight of the goals on a distant horizon. We often reach those long term goals through the ongoing support and encouragement of our professors, our family, and our community. I ask that you keep this perspective in mind at the end of your day of classes or research, when you are fatigued, and the final goal may seem distant. There will be a tomorrow, and your renewed strength will bring you a day closer to your dreams. Through steady, incremental efforts, you will become the agent of great change.

To the students, faculty, and staff of our diverse, University community, I therefore extend to you a promise.

The University promises that your journey is also our journey. We are dedicated to assist each of you on your academic, research, and career goals. We will make sure you reach these dreams. We will strongly advocate for the role of our international students in the mission of the University and its myriad opportunities, and we will work to remove obstacles in your path. When challenges appear to frustrate your plans, we will work with you to find solutions. When you feel that everything has

gone wrong, please ask us to help. We will help you make it to the next day. We will provide flexibility in the face of changing circumstances. Our commitment to you is stronger than ever.

In making this promise, I also need to make a request.

I ask for your ongoing assistance in strengthening our University community. Please extend a hand of support and friendship to fellow students and members of our community who have been impacted by these changes. Continue to advocate for the success of your fellow students. Keep faith in your dreams, and use the short-term setbacks as an opportunity to gain wisdom. Expand your own horizons by promoting new collaborations with students, faculty, and staff from different cultural, academic, and political backgrounds. Teach us about your lives and experiences, and thereby enrich the diverse tapestry of our community. And after you have graduated from the U, bring the experience and wisdom you have gained to your own countries and communities, and use your skills and wisdom in service of the people of Utah, and the world.

In closing, I want to acknowledge members of our University community who are here today to advocate for you all as full members of our University community. These individuals include Director Chalimar Swain and the faculty and staff of International Student and Scholar Services, Members of the Graduate School, undergraduate advisors and Directors of Graduate Studies from across campus. We are also joined by our faculty mentors, department chairs, deans, and members of University administration. These people are available to assist you with any of your problems or questions. Please come and say hello. We'd love to meet you.

Through the wisdom of our experience, a commitment to our common journey and our hope for the future, may we never lose sight of our dreams.