

Good afternoon and thank you all for participating with us today. It gives me great hope to see so many of you here, rallying around an issue that affects us all.

I would like to begin by thanking Vice President Biden for his leadership and for visiting the University of Miami to address such an important topic. He has been a leading voice against sexual harassment and violence against women and we thank him for his unwavering commitment in the fight for equality.

It is fitting that we are here during Women's History Month. This year, as we celebrate the countless contributions women have made to society, we are also witnessing a moment of cultural transformation, as women around the world speak up against abuse of all kinds. This movement has not only raised awareness about the prevalence of sexual harassment in our society, it has also inspired us to work harder towards equality for all.

In 2014, just as the White House was developing the It's On Us campaign, the University of Miami created the President's Coalition on Sexual Violence Prevention and Education. The

campaign, spearheaded by Vice President Biden, gave us the perfect opportunity to help turn our campus-wide initiative into a national conversation and it is now one of several initiatives recommended by the It's On Us team that we have implemented at our institution.

I am proud to oversee the coalition since becoming President in 2016. Preventing harassment of any kind in our university is a top priority for my administration and for me, and this remains true regardless of outside forces or rhetoric. We are committed to staying the course and doing all we can to ensure that everyone feels safe on our campuses.

Since becoming President, I have made creating a Culture of Belonging a special priority. To create a true culture of belonging, we must not just simply embrace diversity, but we must also create an environment where everyone is valued and has an opportunity to add value. But that is not possible if there are members of our community who feel unsafe or who do not have

the resources to report abuse. The President's Coalition is one of our most valuable tools in creating a Culture of Belonging.

Since its inception, the coalition has taken a comprehensive view of sexual violence prevention, focusing especially on engaging and educating all members of the UM community on the importance of consent and respect.

It is on all of us to prevent sexual harassment and assault, and this especially means that men must also be engaged on this issue. Sexual harassment affects us all and we all must be part of the solution. Education is key, as is speaking up when you see something wrong.

Here at the University of Miami, we began the 'Canes Care for 'Canes program, which emphasizes the importance of looking out for one another. 'Canes Care for 'Canes aims to achieve a campus community where all 'Canes respect and support each other. That means we all have a responsibility to speak up when we see or hear something that we know isn't right...and sexual harassment and gender-based violence are *never* right.

As a physician that specializes in public health, I have seen the serious health consequences that sexual violence can have on an individual and a community. Sexual violence is not just a criminal justice issue; it is a major public health issue as well, and in order to treat victims and prevent violence, we must understand the scope of the problem. This is why the President's Coalition on Sexual Violence Prevention and Education has created the Campus Climate Survey.

The survey seeks to assess the impact of gender-based and sexual violence in our community, so that we may find new ways to prevent violence and help victims get the resources they need. Today, I would like to announce that we are kicking off the third annual Campus Climate Survey and I look forward to seeing the results later this year. I encourage everyone at our university to take the survey.

None of this is possible without the dedication of our committed faculty, staff and students. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the work of one student in particular, Renu Nargund.

Renu is a sophomore who hails from New Jersey. Her love of science led her to major in Biochemistry and Psychology.

Throughout her time at the U, Renu has worked on several initiatives focused on preventing sexual violence. She was an inaugural It's On Us Ambassador and has continued to be a strong leader during her second year on the team. Renu understands that preventing sexual harassment and assault requires a comprehensive approach, and has spearheaded a number of projects, from representing the University of Miami at the 2018 NASPA Strategies conference on sexual violence prevention to creating marketing campaigns aimed at educating students about consent and safe sex.

The important work Renu does is vital to ensuring a safe and healthy environment for all students and I would like to thank her for all she does for the U. Today also happened to be Renu's birthday. Happy birthday!

I hope all of you will also get involved: sign the It's On Us pledge by going to [www.itsonus.org](http://www.itsonus.org) and most importantly, care for your fellow canes by speaking up and speaking out.

And now, I would like to welcome Renu Nargund.