

The recent racially motivated murders of Angela Michelle Carr, 52, A.J. Laguerre, 19, and Jerrald Gallion, 29, in Jacksonville, Florida are saddening and shocking events. This tragic loss of precious human life and the untold heartbreaking effects on their loved ones and communities gives us reason to consider actions necessary to address the hate that infects our society and results in these and other such horrendous incidents.

Regionally, we must address continuing political movements and actions that undermine our ability to foster harmony and love. These forces declare that discussions of kindness and fairness in schools amount to harmful indoctrination; assert that the uplifting concepts of diversity and inclusion are objectionable; and penalize universities for providing educational opportunities concerning ideals upheld by the U.S. and Idaho Constitutions guaranteeing justice for all. Negative campaigns such as these give hate a space to grow. In response, let us stand together and speak up against these and other misrepresentations as we continue to nurture togetherness and compassion.

Moscow is justifiably known as a kind and open-hearted community. Nevertheless, it is important that we remain vigilant, and that people of all political parties, beliefs, and economic standings, along with government, business, and education leaders set aside their differences and work together to preserve and protect institutions that promote understanding and help to overcome hate. These include our public schools, libraries, and a fair, accessible election system. Also, under threat are the university diversity offices which help to strengthen education and community by celebrating differences and commonalities among all people and cultures.

Let us dedicate ourselves to helping all people feel safe, valued, and respected in our caring community, and let us make sure that all our institutions remain strong and committed to fostering the spirit of belonging that helps build a just and loving society.