

Hate has no home at Panera

- Published on August 16, 2017



[Ron Shaich](#)

founder, chairman, & CEO at Panera Bread

Team,

It's been a distressing few days for anyone who values inclusion, tolerance and American values. On Saturday, we saw in the streets of Charlottesville, Va., "alt-right" groups giving neo-Nazi salutes, yelling anti-Semitic chants and running down law-abiding citizens. Clearly, these are not nice people who anyone should defend. Since then, we've witnessed more hate-fueled events around the country, including the vandalism of the Holocaust Memorial in downtown Boston – for the second time this summer.

Yet with every distressing event, there has been another that inspires confidence in America. First, we've seen that the rule of law works. These extremist groups don't control us or our country. People who commit hate crimes and mow people down with a car are arrested. Second, good people representing both political parties – among them, Marco Rubio, Bill Nelson, John McCain, Bernie Sanders and Jeff Flake – are declaring that this is not the American way. And, finally, friends of mine, like Ken Frazier of Merck, and the CEOs of Intel, Under Armour and the

Alliance for American Manufacturing have taken a stand by resigning from President Trump's advisory council on manufacturing after he failed to condemn the "alt-right" groups behind the Charlottesville rally.

Some of you may be familiar with the song lyrics, "Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me." I know many of you share this sentiment. I don't think there's ever been a more important time for us to stand up as citizens for our American values and voice our disgust for hate based on race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. You can count me personally as one American who will do all in my power to fight hate.

And within Panera, there's never been a more important time for us to live our Cultural Value of respecting the dignity of the whole person, the differences in people and the diversity they bring to our team, our cafes and our communities. I am very proud that Panera has always been a place where all law-abiding people are welcome to work, to eat and to gather without intimidation, and you can rest assured your entire Leadership team is committed to keeping it that way.

Throughout 2017, we've talked about keeping the promise of Panera...let's also be committed to keeping the promise of our country.

All my best,

Ron