

To: NOMAS Council
From: NAMEN (North American MenEngage Network) Steering Committee
Date: 11-20-13

RE: NOMAS/ Haven "Forging Justice" Conference

The North America MenEngage Network (NAMEN) is a newly formed regional network of organizations and individuals of different genders and sexualities working with men and boys to achieve gender equality, end violence, and promote health for men, women and children in North America. NAMEN is a regional chapter of the Global MenEngage Alliance (www.menengage.org.)

We are aware of the incidents of silencing and repression which occurred at the 38th National Conference on Men & Masculinity (M&M), "**Forging Justice: Creating Safe, Equal, and Accountable Communities**" which NOMAS sponsored in partnership with HAVEN, an anti-domestic and sexual assault agency in Oakland County, MI. We have reviewed the [article](#) by Emi Koyama and the video segment of the council meeting when Emi Koyama and other participants from the conference expressed their concerns. We have also reviewed postings from Emi Koyama, Melissa McEwan, Cristy Cardinal, Lauren Chief Elk and others related to turning off the live- streaming of Emi Koyama's presentation as well as subsequent concerns regarding Robert Brannon's actions and responses from the NOMAS council.

We would like to start by acknowledging and affirming the words of Emi Koyama, Melissa McEwan, Cristy Cardinal, Lauren Chief Elk, and others who have spoken about their experiences at the conference. We support their requests for change and strive, with this letter, to encourage the leadership of NOMAS to continue your efforts to be accountable to those whom you have offended and harmed.

In reviewing the [list of demands](#) as posted on the [shakesville](#) website, and the NOMAS response, we recognize that some demands seem to be met while others appear partially met and yet others not attended to at all. We ask NOMAS leadership to listen to the women making the demands in your efforts at accountability and to respond fully to the stated demands.

In the event NOMAS cannot address a demand to the extent requested, we recommend you clearly articulate why you chose to refuse a demand or answered the demand to the degree in which you did.

Allyship needs to be a consensual process, and we cannot expect to be considered an ally if we continue to silence those we claim to "ally" with. As aspiring allies, we must engage honestly with those who experience institutional and cultural oppression that we are responsible for creating. When it is determined our actions reflect the very systems of oppression we are working to transform, it is our obligation to pursue the necessary steps toward accountability. We must consider the complexities of these collaborations and engage in deliberations which result in the thoughtful development of policy and protocol that will assist us in maintaining the integrity of our efforts.

We realize that the mistakes made by NOMAS are mistakes that all of us who strive to be

allies — and we as a collective — can and will make. It is our continual responsibility to seek understanding, accept responsibility for our decisions, and engage honestly in deliberations with others to challenge both our ignorance and our privilege simultaneously. Our subsequent actions will then allow those we aspire to ally with to determine future partnerships in our collective work for justice.

We include ourselves in this call for accountability to keep our words, our actions, and our work in check. As a newly formed network of diverse men and women working as partners to address issues of gender oppression, the NAMEN steering committee will use this opportunity to further engage internally, and with others, in these critical conversations and review our policies and practices related to processes of accountability which enhance the integrity of the network.

Sincerely,
NAMEN Steering Committee

Jean Bernard	Individual		Canada
Steven Botkin	Men's Resources International	Executive Director	US
Humberto Carolo	White Ribbon Campaign	Director of Programs	Canada
Dr. Erin Casey	University of Washington, School of Social Work	Associate Professor	US
Tess Cody	Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence / Iowa Men's Action Network	Prevention Coordinator	US
Jessica Danforth	The Native Youth Sexual Health Network		Canada/ US
Chuck Derry	Gender Violence Institute/MN Men's Action Network: Alliance to Prevent Sexual and Domestic Violence	Co-Founder	US
Rus Funk	MensWork	Executive Director	US
Alan Heisterkamp	University of Northern Iowa (Center for Violence Prevention)	Director, MVP Leadership Institute	US
Rod Kaskalla	Pueblo of Nambe	Domestic Violence Coordinator	US
Leni Marin	Futures Without Violence	Senior Vice President	US
Craig Norberg-Bohm	Jane Doe Inc.	Coordinator Men's Initiative	US
Sulaiman Nuriddin	Men Stopping Violence	Director of men's education	US
Brian O'Connor	Futures Without Violence		US
Rob Okun	VOICE MALE Magazine	Editor	US
Chad Keoni Sniffen	California Coalition Against Sexual Assault	Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator	US