

Our View: WSU racists want attention, so let's give it to them

Devin Rokyta/Moscow-Pullman Daily News

Between Pullman and Moscow, the population is more or less split down the middle. Half vote Republican, half check Democrat.

Despite that, most of us get along peacefully and politely (at least when we are not on social media). While we may not agree on the issues, most of us remain civil and respectful of opposing viewpoints - it is part of being a community.

Unfortunately, that's not happening on the Washington State University campus. Issues with race and bigotry have been simmering there for years, but a boiling point has been reached during the past year, a period stained by incidents involving racism - both blatant and thinly veiled - and hate speech.

A player in many incidents is the campus' College Republicans group, which was responsible for erecting a plywood wall in the center of campus to support Donald Trump - a stunt properly labeled racist - and scheduling a speech by Milo Yiannopoulos, who has gained notoriety for his anti-gay and racist viewpoints. Of course, his career appropriately went down the toilet after his comments defending pedophilia surfaced.

Then this past week, a racist video, including footage from the wall stunt and other racist commentary and images, circulated on social media. The College Republicans have denied responsibility for the edited video, but they certainly aren't condemning it.

As evidenced by its actions, the College Republicans are not concerned with promoting dialogue about conservative ideals and policies. Their goal is to be divisive, and get attention and followers on Twitter and YouTube, with one prominent member exceptionally proud of himself for eclipsing the 100,000-follower mark. Way to go.

For its part, campus administration has done little more than condemn the actions, although it has also indicated it is investigating the video and attempting to identify those responsible.

When WSU does, those responsible should be publicly identified as the racists they are. While we enjoy freedom of speech, there are consequences to that speech, even if it is just public shaming. It would also be nice to make them feel as uncomfortable and unwelcome on campus - and in public - as they have made many minority students.

That would be a good start to changing the atmosphere at WSU.