

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Office of the President
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Thank you for your letter and your interest in the naming of old Botany Hall after Carrie Chapman Catt. One of the strengths of a university campus is the freedom to hold divergent views, and I certainly support the right of everyone to express opinions on any given topic. I believe that this discussion has educational value, for it helps deepen our understanding of the circumstances surrounding the woman's suffrage movement and the movement for civil rights for African Americans and how the two issues have intersected.

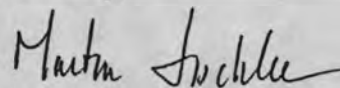
Carrie Chapman Catt was one of the leading figures in the suffrage movement in the United States, and she had a long and deep relationship with Iowa State University. The decision to rename Botany Hall after Carrie Chapman Catt was made six years ago by the State Board of Regents after a discussion of her historical importance and her relationship to the State of Iowa and Iowa State University. At that time, members of the university community had an opportunity to voice their opinions on this re-naming.

Since the time of that decision, these issues have been discussed and they continue to be discussed. The debate on her views on the issue of race is not a new one. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for the Study of Women in Politics will be bringing in highly regarded scholars to discuss Catt, the women's suffrage movement, and its relationship with the civil rights movement.

Iowa State is committed to maintaining a supportive environment for all members of its community. As part of our commitment to African-Americans, we continue our efforts to increase the number of faculty, staff, and students to achieve a critical mass and to strengthening the African-American Studies program. We are in the midst of a national search for a highly-qualified, senior faculty member to serve as director of the program; we are also seeking to hire several additional faculty to broaden curricular offerings. Along with the new diversity requirement in the undergraduate curriculum, these new faculty will bring us closer to our mutual goals.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,



Martin C. Jischke
President