

One hundred fifty-five years ago today the last people enslaved in this country were emancipated. However, the recent traumatic deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and so many others serve as tragic reminders of the injustice of systemic racism and violence. In addition, the ways this global pandemic has disproportionately affected and killed members of Black communities across our nation has exposed health inequities that are unacceptable. All of this is taking a heavy toll on members of our community. Those of you who are grieving are not doing so alone. We, too, are outraged and filled with pain and grief.

As faculty leaders, we stand in solidarity with the swelling chorus of voices calling for justice. We must not allow these acts of violence and obvious systemic inequities to go unnoticed, unacknowledged, and unaddressed. We will not remain silent in the face of hatred and bias as doing so allows these societal blights to grow and undermine the very fabric of our communities.

We also recognize that our words are not enough and that we must work towards a position of anti-racism. This will require deep structural change that will only come through collective action and community mobilization. Each of us must commit to ongoing efforts to end racism and violence. The Black communities have, for far too long, held the weight of injustice on their shoulders. The work that needs to be done must be carried predominantly by those of us in positions of privilege. It is only through this action that we will be able to advance equity and inclusion for all people at Purdue University.

Black Lives Matter. And we at Purdue University must do better.

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