California State University SAN MARCOS | OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear CSUSM Community,

Three names are on my mind today as I write this message with a heavy heart: Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd. They now join a much longer list of Black individuals who have been senselessly killed as we yet again are reminded of the seemingly inescapable presence of racism in its various forms in our country.

I acknowledge the trauma and pain that many of our students, families, faculty and staff are experiencing in the wake of these most recent tragic acts of violence. I want you to know that you are not alone. I stand with you along with so many others in our campus community, and we extend our support particularly to CSUSM's Black students, faculty, staff, alumni and community partners – we see you, we respect you and we support you.

I am committed to supporting our Black community. It is our responsibility to uphold and honor our values of inclusiveness, community and intellectual engagement. As an institution of higher education, we must speak out with our voices to condemn racism while also actively working together to destroy oppression and hate in all its forms.

You are invited to join a virtual forum, "Reflections on Ahmaud, Breonna, George, and Others: A Space to Feel and Act," hosted by the CSUSM Black Student Center, on Tuesday, June 2, at 6 p.m. Additional details about how to access this event will be available on their website, or you may contact Black Student Center Director John Rawlins III at jrawlins@csusm.edu. All are welcome – I hope you will come and share with us as we seek a path forward.

There are also the following campus resources available to support our campus community:

- For our students, our student life centers for identity, inclusion and empowerment are open virtually, including the Black Student Center, Cross-Cultural Center, Gender Equity Center, Latin@/x Center, and LGBTQA Pride Center.
- In addition, for students, our dedicated team of Student Health and Counseling Services professionals are available to assist you and may be contacted at 760-750-4915.
- The Cougar Care Network can also provide information about on- and off-campus resources at 760-750-7627.
- For faculty and staff, the Employee Assistance Program is available at 1-800-367-7474.
- For all CSUSM community members, the Office of University Ombuds also offers confidential and neutral assistance; and the Office of Inclusive Excellence also offers a number of resources and may reached at diversity@csusm.edu.

While I am horrified by the news of Ahmaud, Breonna and George, I know that this is not the first time we've seen headlines of this nature. Every day acts of violence and hate occur that don't receive this broad coverage. My thoughts are with all the family members and friends who have lost loved ones so tragically. I realize that I could never truly understand the vulnerability inherent in being a person of color in a society that allows for the continued violence against Black individuals, but I will stand with our campus community to challenge the status quo.

We must stand together as a campus community to be the change we need to see in our broader world.

Sincerely,

Ellen Neufeldt
President

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