June 1, 2020

Dear students, faculty, and staff,

We write with deep sadness and solidarity for the grief and anger so many of us are feeling in response to the tragic death of George Floyd. We stand in support of the African American community, and all those who have been on the front lines of protests nationwide.

Like many of you, we are grieved and searching not just for answers but agency, and the means to finally address the underlying issues that allow such brutal acts to persist against African Americans. In a recent history that includes Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, it is impossible to perceive how we, as a community, can be asked to overcome once again something so horrible — and, yet, we must. Not merely as an act of overcoming, but rather as an act of unifying determination to confront the conditions that continue to allow horrific events like these to take place.

As a school, our diversity makes us better. So, too, does a mindful and deliberate inclusivity that leads to kindness, tolerance, equality, equity and parity. The empathy, and therefore the compassion that arises from a human-centered focus on change can provide the very viewpoint that is essential to envisioning a culture of universal respect, and one that protects the dignity and safety of every individual. As we move forward, truly forward, we, as a school, re-commit ourselves to this long-standing principle, and commit our every resource to making it so.

We are all restless for change. And, as members of this unique community, we know we must drive the change we seek. Further, we know at our core that change can be fragile and temporary, and what must be sought now is a genuine and lasting transformation. We, all of us, together and as individuals must choose to harness anger, sadness and disappointment into new ideas, and new paths to transformational change. And while doing so, remember that the most important choice we make every single day is the choice to see and care for each other as human beings, without bias or limitations, as we are.

We are here with you.

In solidarity,

Erica Muhl, Dean

Jessica Vernon, Associate Dean for Admission and Student Affairs

Amber Bradley, Assistant Director, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access