



Dear UMOR Colleagues,

As we grieve the loss of so many to COVID-19, our country confronts the tragedy of the needless and senseless death of George Floyd. His death, while handcuffed and defenseless, is yet another blatant example of the racial injustices occurring daily within our nation. He is added to a long list of Black Americans who have died needlessly, including Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor.

We need look no further than the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on minority communities to know that racism is a public health crisis.

We support our colleagues, and our community, who grieve the loss of another Black American. We support the people of the country who stand up against intolerance, racism, and bias in our society. We support those who aim to end the cycle of hate and hurt that continues in every city, large or small, across the United States and seek to understand how we may do better.

It is important during this time that we not be silent, and to say loudly that these events are wrong; the ongoing violence against Black people and People of Color in this country is inexcusable. In UMOR, we must be a place of inclusion and safety for all staff, faculty, and learners, regardless of color, gender, sexual orientation, or religion.

However, we need to be honest with ourselves and acknowledge we have work to do to achieve this goal. This work must include listening to and centering the perspectives of those in our community whose day-to-day lived realities align with what we increasingly know from research and scholarship — that these current events reflect longstanding systems of racism, dehumanization, and inequality.

As part of the research community, we will continue to look to understand a path forward through science and scholarship, supporting bold evidence-based action, and with a strong voice of compassion. Our collective work together can make a difference. In moving forward, we welcome your ideas and input on ways our research community can unite for positive impact.

Please take good care during these challenging times.

Sincerely,

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