

June 3, 2020

Dear Louisville Seminary Community:

This afternoon (June 3, 2020), at 4:30 p.m., leaders of higher education institutions in greater Louisville and Kentuckiana will join protesters in Jefferson Square to stand in solidarity against racism and the social injustices that have caused much pain throughout our community and throughout our country.

The Louisville Seminary Community is invited to join. ***Please attend ONLY if you are comfortable doing so.*** Otherwise, please keep all advocates for justice in our community in your prayers. And continue to pray and advocate for victims of racism, police brutality, and all forms of systemic oppression.

I, along with my colleagues in higher education, have endorsed the following statement. Again, my thanks to our students, faculty, employees, alums, and friends who continue to advocate for justice and healing in our broken world.

In the Presence,
Alton

Statement from Leaders of Greater Louisville/Kentuckiana Higher Education Institutions

James Baldwin said, "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." The harsh truth that must be faced is that Black Americans still face obstacles that leave them, in far too many cases, lagging behind their white counterparts on important indicators of education, income, health, and wealth. Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd are just the latest names on our collective dishonor roll of Black lives that were taken casually and, all too often, without consequence. The very real racial inequities of today are the result of a legacy of systemic racism.

We, as leaders of higher education institutions in greater Louisville and Kentuckiana, are aware both of the promise of higher education as a transformative force in society, and of the problematic history of these very institutions in perpetuating racial inequity.

As leaders of these institutions, we, too, are complicit in maintaining the status quo and it is therefore incumbent upon us to take real and meaningful action to achieve the ideals of equity that our institutions espouse.

We believe that by working together we can do more and do better as agents of positive change.

1. We pledge to educate ourselves and our own college and university communities to recognize and work against structural racism.
2. We pledge to work together to improve access to higher education for our African-American and other students of color.
3. We pledge to create pathways for African-American and other students of color to meaningful and high-demand jobs and careers and acknowledge the need for more Black professionals in healthcare and education and engineering and law as in many other spheres.
4. We pledge to engage fully and meaningfully in the life of West Louisville.
5. With our institutional privileges of knowledge, reach, resources, legacy, and more, we pledge to consistently demonstrate our commitment to the objective fact that Black Lives Matter.

Neeli Bendapudi, University of Louisville

Susan Donovan, Bellarmine University

Travis Haire, Ivy Tech, Sellersburg

Ty Handy, Jefferson Community and Technical College

Jay Marr, Sullivan University, Louisville

Tori Murden McClure, Spalding University

Alton B. Pollard, III, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Ray Wallace, Indiana University Southeast

