

Colleagues,

Over the last few weeks, we have witnessed a series of disturbing actions leading to the tragic deaths of Ahmuad Arbery, George Floyd, and in our city, Breonna Taylor. These are the latest victims of violence that highlight the racial inequities in our community and nation. The emotional, mental, and physical toll of these deaths are devastating and cannot go unmentioned or mistaken for what it is; systemic racism that continues to surface in various forms and identities.

We write to express not only our sadness but also support for accountability, justice, and change. As the College of Education and Human Development, it is our responsibility to stand against such practices and reaffirm our commitment to social justice and equity. We have to reinforce anti-racist rhetoric, facilitate sustainable dialogue, and work with our community partners to address the needs and concerns of those impacted.

Further, our role as educators is critically important. We know in our college we have individuals who want to learn and educate themselves in the areas of social justice and equity, others who have the desire to complete the work and seek the resources, those who have the capacity to be more aware, and a contingency who would like to be more intentional and impactful. CEHD is a place where each of these areas can be supported, developed, and enacted in a meaningful and intentional way.

CEHD is an integral part of the community in which we reside. The CEHD is committed to improving our society and leading the charge in the areas of social justice and equity. We clearly have a lot of work ahead. While we must not become discouraged, we should acknowledge our sadness while working to transform our society. Our hearts are heavy, and our thoughts are with the loved ones and friends of those lost during this challenging time.

In her email this afternoon, President Bendapudi highlighted current and future actions UofL is taking ensure we fully live out our commitment to being a Community of Care that values Diversity and Inclusion. This is a moment for us all to take stock of our own lives and communities and recognize the inequities and exclusions that our friends, co-workers and family members experience on a daily basis.

We look forward to the immediate work ahead as our college strives to imprint solutions and change.

CEHD Senior Leadership Team