

I am angry – irate may be a better word – and I suspect you are, too. We all should be. I have been horrified by the videos and accounts of African Americans being mistreated and murdered by aberrant police officers – and by the too-sluggish responses of our justice system and public officials to these atrocities. I am angry at the way African Americans are treated in our society, in our economy, and in our justice system. The violence and cruelty of these events is felt first and most by black Americans – but these actions are also an affront to *all* Americas, robbing us of the chance to be who we want to be – to live up to our universal principles and moral aspirations. *This is not who we are!*

The video of George Floyd being killed at the hands of the police is grotesque – and the officers' indifferent demeanor is horrifying. The notion that Breonna Taylor was shot eight times in her own home, right here in Louisville, by our city's police executing a "no knock" warrant issued on bad information must cause us all to feel fear and hurt. It also causes me to feel shame – this is my city. The idea that Ahmaud Arbery could not jog near his home without being murdered by racist vigilantes shatters our belief that we live in an enlightened society. Last night another life was lost to violence in Louisville, and I see no end. I am outraged by these events but, more deeply, I am horrified by the pervasive reality they expose – that is, I am horrified once again at the truth these events lay bare about how we think about and treat African Americans in America.

In my anger, I find the impulse to act. I want to address the root causes of these gross inequities, and I know you do, too. We all want to act, *and we all want our College of Business to act*. We want to be part of "the solution," of the possibilities and the progress – and the healing – that is so vitally needed. When we see the other police officers standing by while George Floyd is murdered, we must hope, we must pray that *we would have acted*. We are people who cannot stand by and we are a community that is not indifferent – it is not in our fiber to tolerate these iniquities. We aspire to intervene – *we must commit to act and to acting soon!*

If we will change the world, it must be in our own spheres, with the talents we have been given, grounded in our own values and passions. As the dean of our College, I know you expect – you demand that I lead our shared response and that I organize our acting. I will do that.

On Friday, during our weekly all-school open forum, we will dedicate our time to discussing how we can act to become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive as an organization and how we can redouble our efforts to change the world, to improve our society, and especially to contribute to racial equity and justice. I have asked a wonderful friend of the College's, [Marvin Boakye](#) (the new Chief People Officer at Papa John's) to facilitate the session. *I will not create an agenda*. All I will ask is that people come prepared to talk about how they feel, to find in our community shared compassion and shared commitment, and I will ask that we focus, by the end of the discussion, on

*specific actionable plans for our College to contribute to progress and to advancing racial and social justice in our world.*

I look forward to this discussion. I look forward to intensifying and amplifying our organization's action-oriented commitment to change, and I look forward with great hope to seeing that vital change which we surely must and surely will produce.

Best regards,  
Todd

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he/him/his ([what's this?](#))

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