

## **Statement from Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Centers (9/23/2020):**

**Cultural Center, Office of Diversity and Equity, Diversity Education and Inclusive Excellence, HSC Office for Diversity and Inclusion, LGBT Centers (Belknap and HSC), Muhammad Ali Institute for Peace and Social Justice, School of Medicine - Office of Community Engagement and Diversity, Women's Center**

The Diversity and Equity units are devastated by the injustice in our community. Unfortunately, these feelings are not new, and while we are not surprised, we are as deeply disappointed by the injustices continuously experienced in BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities. This heartbreak is centuries old. We hoped this time would be different, and perhaps we even felt the opportunity for meaningful change was at hand. Many of us also knew or feared deep in our hearts this decision by the Kentucky Attorney General would be the same outcome - a lack of justice. The pain and anger are just as raw as the first-time injustice is experienced, and we are left with little-to-no outlet for our rage. To say many in our community are devastated and irreparably harmed, does not convey how deep this hurt goes.

We may not know the full details of Breonna Taylor's case, and we may never know. We do know there is no justifiable reason to take her life from us. It is evident from Breonna's case and the many thousands of similar cases of Black and Brown people being murdered, that there is deeply entrenched systemic racism in policing, our justice system, and our society. The disparate outcomes are indisputable. We continue to see remnants of the original "slave patrols" show up in policing today, as Black and Brown communities are still subjected to law-and-ordered approaches, while white communities are protected and served.

So now what? As we once again pick up the pieces, let's hold spaces for ourselves to mourn, to scream, to cry, and to provide the same support for others. Our offices will be holding in-person and virtual spaces to support ourselves and communities for these reasons. The Counseling Center's services are free for students, and we encourage you to seek mental health support wherever you are comfortable. Self-care is vital right now.

Our community needs healing, and how Louisville will heal has yet to be determined. We know that we can't heal by judging others for how they/we process pain whether it be through withdrawal, fear, anger or rage, etc. All are expressions of deep harm, feeling silenced, powerless, or invisible.

Let's channel our pain and rage into action. While justice may not come for Breonna, we must work to achieve justice for others, and to dismantle/reform racist systems that lead to so many injustices. Those who have been leading the protests at Breonna Square for months have always needed our presence and support. They certainly need it now. Our legislators, local and national, must be made to hear our voices through our direct contact and by voting.

At UofL we have our own systemic racism to address as well. Just as with our justice system, higher education's disparate racial outcomes are evidence of our systemic problems. We need everyone's input and participation as our institution develops its Cardinal Anti-Racism

Agenda: <https://louisville.edu/president/special-programs-initiatives/cardinal-anti-racism-agenda/> .

**For mental health support please reach out to any of the following resources:**

- UofL Counseling Center (students): <https://louisville.edu/counseling>
- UofL Employee Assistance Program (faculty & staff): <https://louisville.edu/hr/benefits/additional/eap>
- Minority Mental Health Project: <https://www.facebook.com/MMHPKY/>
- Open Path Collective: <https://openpathcollective.org/>
- UofL Office of Diversity and Equity and affiliated offices: <https://louisville.edu/diversity>

**To get involved with agencies who are taking action to end racial injustice reach out to the following:**

- Louisville Black Lives Matter and Stand Up Sundays: <https://blackliveslouisville.org/>
- Louisville Showing Up for Racial Justice (LSURJ): <https://www.facebook.com/SURJLouisville/>
- Kentucky Alliance Against Racism and Political Oppression: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/www.kentuckyalliance.org/>
- Anti-racism resources for white people: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BRIF2\\_zhNe86SGgHa6-VIBO-QgirlTwCTugSfKie5Fs/mobilebasic](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BRIF2_zhNe86SGgHa6-VIBO-QgirlTwCTugSfKie5Fs/mobilebasic)

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- **Bláz Bush** – Director of the LGBT Center at the HSC
- **Valerie Casey** – Director of the Women’s Center
- **Dwayne Compton** – CDO and Associate Dean for Community Engagement and Diversity at the School of Medicine
- **Lisa Gunterman** – Director of the LGBT Center at Belknap
- **Ryan Simpson** – Program Director, HSC Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- **Enid Trucios-Haynes** – Director of the UofL Muhammad Ali Institute for Peace and Justice
- **Marian Vasser** – Executive Director of Diversity & Equity

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