



Statement on the Murder Conviction of Former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin

April 20, 2021

"We are the epicenter for change."

- Courteney Batya Ross, George Floyd's partner outside the Hennepin County Courthouse before the reading of the verdict

"I am hoping this verdict will finally help me get some sleep"

- Philonise Floyd, brother of George Floyd before the reading of the verdict

Earlier today, our community, state, nation, and world collectively stopped and waited together, hoping for justice as news spread that the jury had reached a verdict in the Derek Chauvin murder trial. Together, we held hope for a verdict that might allow George Floyd's family some measure of peace and closure; a verdict that might allow Philonise Floyd to, finally, get some sleep. We recognized that in this moment, as George Floyd's partner Courteney Batya Ross said outside the Hennepin County Government Center before the verdict was announced, Minneapolis was indeed the "epicenter for change." Their voices reflect our aspirations and our humanity.

The jury delivered. Twelve people held Derek Chauvin accountable for the murder of George Floyd. If your response was anything like mine, it was difficult to contain the emotions I felt when three guilty verdicts were read. Profound relief, yes, but also great sadness.

I recognize that it is important to allow room to feel thankful for the work of those involved in the trial, the dedicated service and courage of the jury, and for those who raised their voices in support for our communities. It is important to take time to reflect on and process the outcome for which so many have waited and prayed for. But it is also important to recognize that a verdict cannot return George Floyd to his family, and cannot compensate for the pain of his loss. We continue to grieve with the family and friends of George Floyd who mourn his death.

Profound wrongs cannot be corrected by legal redress and can only be prevented in the future through collective action and social change.

As we move forward, we will continue to say his name. George Floyd. We will say the name of Daunte Wright. Police-involved acts of violence have taken many more lives across the nation, including thirteen-year-old Adam Toledo in Chicago less than a month ago. It is essential that the systems that allow this violence be changed.

As [President Gabel said in her message earlier today](#), our collective advocacy, allyship, and action in the fight against structural racism has never been more critical. The Office for Equity and Diversity is committed to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and access through our [education program](#) and [resources, initiatives, faculty and staff directed groups, affinity spaces, community and University facing unit offices](#), and [funding to support BIPOC students, faculty, and staff](#). We are working daily to achieve our goals of access, justice, and equity at the University and in all of our communities. We welcome your partnership as we challenge and reimagine the systems that allow racism and hate to persist – and work to truly be an epicenter for change.

Sincerely,

Michael Goh
Professor and Vice President for Equity and Diversity

U of M Resources

For Students

- [Bias Response and Referral Network](#)
- [Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action](#)
- [UMD Campus Climate Website](#)
- [U of M Twin Cities Mental Health Resources](#)
- [U of M Crookston Student Counseling Services](#)
- [U of M Duluth Student Counseling Services](#)
- [U of M Morris student mental health resources](#)
- [U of M Rochester Student Counseling Services](#)
- [BIPOC Mental Health Collective](#)
- [OED Resources for Students](#)
- [OED Education Program and Resources](#)
- [Gopher Equity Project](#)

For Faculty and Staff

- [Mental Health Resources](#)
- [BIPOC Mental Health Collective](#)
- [International Student and Scholar Services](#)
- [OED Resources for Faculty and Staff](#)
- [OED Education Program and Resources](#)
- [Affinity Groups](#)
- [U of M Diversity Community of Practice](#)
- [UMD Campus Climate Website](#)
- [Center for Educational Innovation Teaching Resources – Anti-Racism Resources for Higher Ed](#)
- [Center for Educational Innovation Teaching Resources – Trauma-Informed Teaching and Learning in Higher Ed](#)

U of M Campus Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Units

- [U of M Crookston: Multicultural Education](#)
- [U of M Duluth: Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [U of M Morris: Equity, Diversity, and Intercultural Programs](#)

- [U of M Rochester: Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [U of M Twin Cities: Office for Equity and Diversity](#)

Anti-Racism Resources

- [Faculty Fighting Racism](#), created by the Graduate School Diversity Consultation Team
- [Anti-Racism Reading Lists](#) from the U of M Libraries
- [OED Education Program and Resources](#)