



Statement on the One-Year Anniversary of the Murder of George Floyd

May 25, 2021

“Six-year-old GiGi Floyd said it best: “Daddy changed the world.”

One year after the murder of her father, George Floyd, many might argue that not enough has changed. Acts of violence based in racism, misogyny, and hatred still occur. Yet, GiGi was right. The world is different today. And that difference gives hope of profound and sustainable change.

The University of Minnesota is examining our mission-driven role in effecting positive change through our teaching, research, and service.

We must teach in a way that recognizes a history that has for too long been selective and operated both intentionally and unconsciously to perpetuate discriminatory systems. We must foster a climate and culture where students of different races, gender expressions, religious beliefs, and abilities do not have to question their welcome, recognizing that only through understanding and inclusion can we help prepare *all* students for success in a rapidly changing world. As Krysja Johnson ('21, UMR, Health Sciences Major), one of the first recipients of the U of M Scholarship in honor of George Floyd, said, “The best thoughts and ideas are in a diverse group of people. They even have research on this. I wonder sometimes, why is that not already happening? I hope to be a pioneer in making sure there are all kinds of faces and bodies in every type of job and I think that will make America and the world, in general, a better place.”

We have the ability to accelerate change through research like Dr. Rachel Hardeman’s, whose work at the [Center for Anti-Racism Research for Health Equity](#), established in 2021, is dedicated to addressing and uprooting structural racism’s impact on health and healthcare. “As a Black child growing up in Minnesota, it was clear to me from a very young age that not everyone was afforded the same opportunities to achieve optimal health and wellbeing,” she said. “I saw very

real examples of racial health inequities in my own family and within the broader community. I have dedicated my career to advancing racial justice so that Black communities can live full, healthy lives, and I see no better place to do this than right here at home.”

Our service must include University of Minnesota Law School Dean Garry Jenkins’ recognition that this response cannot be temporary. “Our students understand that the Black community has been in extraordinary pain, and that our society has real work to do to make racial equity and justice a reality for all Americans,” Jenkins explains. “Lawyers and Minnesota Law will need to address these issues head-on. Students want to understand, study, and engage with these issues now so they are prepared to make a difference in our profession.”

The death of George Floyd has accelerated efforts already underway. The University – through leadership and the actions of students, staff, and faculty – is working to advance research, teaching, and engagement that promotes fair housing, equal access to healthcare, new approaches to public safety, stronger pathways to both early and higher education, and criminal justice reform, to name only a few imperatives.

As we remember George Floyd, we must also remember that the world changed not just because he died, but because 17-year-old Darnella Frazier had the courage not to look away. By filming his murder, she enabled the world to see injustice more clearly than before and, by seeing, to act more decisively to build a world where equity is part of everyone’s lived experience. We too shall not look away.

Sincerely,

Michael Goh
Professor and Vice President for Equity and Diversity

Our Strategic Priorities

In the Office for Equity and Diversity, we remain committed to three Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) strategic priorities that support the university's MPact 2025 Systemwide Strategic Plan, especially Commitment 4: Community and Belonging:

1. **Increasing representational diversity;**
2. **Improving campus climate; and**
3. **Building, supporting, and aligning systemwide DEI partnerships.**

These priorities were chosen after deep review and consultation with our campus and system communities because they were determined to be the most effective ways to advance the types of transformational institutional change necessary to dismantle systems that have historically resulted in barriers for underrepresented communities seeking full access to the University and its resources. [Learn more about the work of the Office for Equity and Diversity.](#)

Moment of Silence for George Floyd at 1 pm on May 25, 2021

Governor Tim Walz issued a proclamation asking Minnesotans to observe a moment of silence in honor of the one-year anniversary of George Floyd's death. The moment of silence will take place at 1 pm and will last for 9 minutes and 29 seconds.

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](#)