



May 31, 2020

Statement RE: George Floyd

We, the student leaders at the Stur姆 College of Law, stand in solidarity with our colleagues and community of color. Our society is in the midst of unrest due to continued police brutality, the lack of respect for human dignity, and the ongoing effects of systemic racism. Our communities are grieving the loss of loved ones and exercising their rights to demand justice. For many generations, police have killed an unacceptable number of people of color for merely wanting to exist in society. Only recently has social media brought these injustices to light. We have a responsibility to take action against the unjust killings of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless others. We have a responsibility to **Act**, **Educate**, and **Support**.

**Act**

It is important to recognize that everyone processes emotions differently, but inaction is not an option. We are deeply encouraged by everyone's desire to see progress and recognize that no kind-hearted act is too small. For several days, and for more to come, many of us have participated in protests to express ourselves. And while the media sensationalizes our anger, remember that our outward expressions reflect our hope for a brighter future. We are calling on everyone to constructively channel their frustrations. We ask that people remember our shared pain and suffering in their daily decisions and our hopes in their various modes of civic engagement. We ask white allies to follow the lead from people of color and advocate for justice. Many of the issues we are confronting are systemic and go beyond the ballot box, but participating in local, state, and national elections to elect leaders that see people of color as "very fine people" and not as "rapists," "thugs," or "criminals" will help us in this fight for social justice.

**Educate**

We call on our white allies, both students and professors, to join us in educating other white people within our institution on the systemic racism that this nation was built on, and the racism that continues to thrive in this nation. When white allies educate other white people, they should follow the lead of organizers of color and utilize their materials, training programs, and resources because people of color have the experience and knowledge to effectively educate.

We call on our administrators to offer more opportunities for students to be exposed to racial issues. This need can be met by offering a one-credit first-year course on the racial issues that minorities face or by offering classes on police brutality, critical race theory, and inter-disciplinary classes about implicit biases. Additionally, we call on our administrators to announce a concrete and specific plan to diversify our faculty, staff, and student body.

We call on our faculty members to have uncomfortable conversations during class regarding race and the role race plays in the legal outcome. We call for faculty and administrators to plan a forum, with the involvement of student leaders, at or around orientation for analyzing and understanding the legal and policy issues associated with systemic racism, police brutality, and acts of civil disobedience in places

such as Minneapolis, Atlanta, and Denver. We call on the administration to meet with student leaders to discuss the impact these proposals can have on our community.

We call on us all to deeply and honestly examine our own implicit bias and our contributions to the status quo of systemic racism. Real change will not occur in our society until it occurs in each of us.

**Support**

We have the responsibility to support the movement. As members of the legal community our time, skills, and other resources must aggressively support any and all avenues for change. That is why we call on the administration to reinforce and expand vital resources such as: the Rocky Mountain Collective on Race, Place, and Law; legal offices and initiatives that support low-income communities of color like the Student Law Office, public service externships, movement lawyering lab, and other nonprofit partners; and academic assistance, such as a full-time diversity and inclusion faculty advisor. We also call on the SCOL community to donate to organizations and efforts like Reclaim the Block, the Black Visions Collective, the Minnesota Freedom Fund, the Colorado Freedom Fund, and many more.

As student leaders, we promise to support each other on this long road of shared responsibility. But we cannot promise that this time things will be different. We can only hope and know that until things change, **WE STILL CAN'T BREATHE!**

In solidarity,

**Black Law Student Association**



**Latinx Law Student Association**



**Asian Pacific American Law Student Association**



**OUTLaws**



**Student Bar Association**

