

June 2, 2020

Content warning: murder, death, anti-Black violence

Dear Family,

First, we want to acknowledge that we are all grieving, angry, emotionally exhausted, and processing a wide range of emotions as we continue to process the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, on top of the thousands of nameless individuals, whose lives have been taken at the hands of state-sanctioned violence in America. The recent deaths of Black folx compounded with ongoing and historical systemic oppression and anti-Black violence has ignited direct action in our communities across the country and on an international scale. We know that many of you may be directly or indirectly connected to folx on the front lines, and you may also be engaging in direct action in your communities. It is our hope that you are taking care of yourself in the midst of finishing up the spring quarter. On top of your studies and responsibilities, you are now forced to once again process the trauma of witnessing the deaths of unarmed individuals at the hands of the police. We want to acknowledge how difficult the current state of affairs are and how the many layers of current events deeply impacts you. It does not help that the current backdrop of the nation is in a public health crisis that is disproportionately affecting our Black community due to sustained health inequities and structural racism in this country.

Though it shouldn't be a discussion of whether Black lives do indeed matter, it is worthwhile to note that this should not be, and is not, a conversation to just be held in our Black community. The conversations, the statements, the protests and anti-racist work largely should not be held and sustained by only Black folx. It is necessary to reiterate and understand that this work should not always fall on the people affected most by this collective trauma. So, to our allies who have stepped up and are doing work, we thank you though the work shouldn't stop here and must definitely evolve. We would like to recognize the outpouring of support from across campus, the statements of solidarity and direct emails to us in the Black House have comforted us to know that the university is recognizing the collective pain we are experiencing. Click [here](#) for the most recent statement of *Confronting Racial Injustice* from Persis, Susie (VPSA) and Tiffany (ORL). A [statement](#) was also released this morning from Susie to Black students outlining additional resources and upcoming events. Special shout out to [the Black ASSU Leadership](#) and other student leaders that have released statements to the campus community as well.

To Black folx in the community who don't have the mental, emotional and/or spiritual capacity to process, grieve and mourn, we want to affirm you and let you know that it's ok. To Black folx who want to be on the front lines but can't for whatever reason, that's ok. If all you can do is take it day by day and just be, that's ok. If what you need most right now is to regulate your social media intake as a practice of mindfulness and caretaking, that's ok. If your circumstances align with any of the above statements, we want to affirm and assure you that you should not feel any shame or guilt. Lastly, to rest is to revive; to rest is to engage in a revolutionary act of resistance; to rest is to inherently engage in anti-capitalist work. So, if at all possible, please rest.

To our Black faculty and staff colleagues, we see you. We know that you are likely carrying a heavy load of not only trying to personally process and make sense of all that is happening, but you are likely engaging in caretaking, educating and/or organizing in your personal and professional spaces. We hope this goes without saying, but our support and our love extends to you. Oftentimes, we lean on you as a source of rejuvenation and much needed community. We know this stands true especially in times like this and hope we can serve as a source of rejuvenation for you right now.

It is also important for the Black House to provide opportunities for the community to experience *joy in the midst of resistance, grief and uncertainty*. Family, self-care and Black joy are still incredibly important in times like these. Now more than ever, it is important for us to share space and come together as a community. As we wrap up the spring quarter, we will continue to celebrate student and community accomplishments and milestones as seen at our Academic and Community Awards ceremony and our upcoming virtual Class of 2020 Farewell event coming up on June 13th. We view this work as essential to supporting the needs of our community.

In an effort to provide space, community and immediate support for Black students to continue to process and make sense of all that's happening, **we will hold space for undergraduate and graduate students this Thursday, June 4th at 5pm (PST), via [Zoom](#) Password: 601356**. This virtual space is part of the **BCSC Spring Wellness Series** and is being done in collaboration with our CAPS partners in the Vaden Health Center. We encourage you to join us to discuss your pain and frustration and be in community with others. Please find other campus resources below:

On Campus Support Resources

- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offer crisis counseling for urgent needs. Clinicians are always on call, even after hours, at (650) 723-3785
- [Well-Being @ Stanford Coaching](#)
- The Office for Religious Life offers spiritual guidance for students at (650) 723-1762.
 - Zoom Office Hours with Dr. Rania Awaad. [Sign up here](#)
- The Graduate Life Office is available during office hours at (650) 736-7078, or 24/7 at (650) 723-8222, pager ID number 25085

Ways to Take Action

In times like these, it's easy to feel helpless and unsure how to proceed. If you have the capacity, here is a list of ways to take action and make your voices heard.

Demand the sentencing of the four police officers involved in George Floyd's murder.

- Call the following Minneapolis officials or [email them using this template](#):
 - Mayor Jacob Frey: (612) 673-2100
 - DA Mike Freeman: (612) 348-5550
 - Hennepin County Attorney Office: (612) 673-2100
- [Join a phone bank](#) organized by Stanford Students for Workers' Rights
- [Sign this petition](#) organized by color of change demanding the prosecution of the officers involved in the murder of George Floyd,

Donate to:

- [Minnesota Freedom Fund](#) (bail out for protesters)
<https://minnesotafreedomfund.org/donate>
- [Black Visions Collective](#) (QT & Black led organizing committee)
<https://secure.everyaction.com/4omQDAR0oUiUagTu0EG-Ig2>
- [Reclaim The Block](#) (Police divestment org in minneapolis)
<https://secure.everyaction.com/zae4prEeKESHBy0MKXTIcQ2>
- [North Star Health Collective](#) (on the ground medical supplies and personnel)
<https://www.northstarhealthcollective.org/donate>
- [George Floyd Memorial Fund](#)
- [I Run with Maud Fund](#)

Support Local Demands:

- Sign Reclaim the Block's petition urging MN city council to defund the police, <https://secure.everyaction.com/eR7GA7oz70GL8doBq19LrA2>
- 26 Ways to be in the Struggle Beyond the Streets: https://issuu.com/nlc.sf.2014/docs/beyondthestreets_final

******Thank you to El Centro Chicano y Latino, Markaz, and additional campus partners for assisting with curating this ongoing list of resources.***

Upcoming Events

Tuesday 6/2

- Markaz Community Check-In & Black Liberation Teach-In (3:30pm PST) [Zoom Link](#)
- BCSC NIA Series (4pm PST) RSVP [Here](#)

Wednesday 6/3

- **Meditative Practice and Social Activism: Healing Hearts Circle with Kamilah Majied**

2pm - 3pm Register [here](#) to receive Zoom details

A healing moment of reflection and engagement at a time of grief and rage in our nation, this event is open to people of all ethnicities. Kamilah will lead a guided meditation to center us amidst violence situation in which we find ourselves, followed by reflections on how contemplation guides action. She will share insights on how contemplative practice enables us to process and harness emotions of rage and hatred in the face of racial violence and injustice and empower our social activism. A Q&A will follow and she will close with another short meditation.

- **Institute for Diversity in the Arts** for a special conversation with Maritri Garrett and DJ Lynnee Denise on crafting and cultivating an artistic voice and vision as independent artists **4-6 pm (PST)**. <https://events.stanford.edu/events/879/87936/>
- **The Markaz On the Road to Prison Abolition: Challenging the Bail System with Faith**, (4pm PST) RSVP [here](#)

Thursday 6/4

- BCSC +CAPS Holding Space/ Wellness Check In-Black Student centered (5pm PST) via [Zoom](#) Password: 601356. Dr. LaWanda Hill and other CAPS partners will be curating the space.

Friday 6/5

- **Vigil for Black Lives**-Collaboration w/ ORL, BCSC and Ujamaa (Time is TBD)
- **Black Staff Alliance** Webinar focused on the killing of Black Men and Women in America Q/A w/ Professor/Dr. Robert Weisberg from the Stanford Law School (4:30pm PST)

Date and time are TBD- **QSR: How to Take Care of Each Other; Community Care in Times of Crisis**-Contact qsr@stanford.edu or check qsr.stanford.edu for more information

Please know we continue to be a source of support, advocacy and place of community for all of you. We see you and we stand with you. If you need to check in with us or be connected to additional resources, feel free to email us directly, Rosalind Conerly conerly@stanford.edu and Christian Price ccprice@stanford.edu.

In community,

Black Community Services Center

