

Statement by USM Leadership on Structural Racism and the Killing of George Floyd

Baltimore, Md. (May 29, 2020) – This week, George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis, a brutal act that recalled other recent killings of black Americans. We acknowledge with one voice the structural racism that's taking the lives of our fellow citizens, and we stand in solidarity as we speak out against racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, discrimination against our LGBTQ and immigrant communities, religious intolerance, and bigotry of any kind.

We are justly saddened, angered, and frustrated by these acts of brutality and the lack of action when black men and women are killed. Mindful of public health guidelines, we also affirm the right of our communities to protest safely and peacefully to address their legitimate concerns.

We believe that public colleges and universities are obligated to help end inequity and to promote social justice. We draw on the leadership and wisdom of our students, faculty, and staff, many of whom confront these issues every day through their teaching, research, and activism.

We encourage all members of the USM community to seek support, if needed, and to involve themselves in addressing these challenges. We urge our students and colleagues not only to vote, but to help safeguard and improve our democracy.

In the days and weeks ahead, we will be listening to the voices of those who are too often silenced or ignored. When we gather together on campus once again, we will examine with greater resolve the racism and systemic inequities that so gravely endanger our minority communities. We are proud to be a part of a University System that believes in humanity, justice, and opportunity for all.

Please take care of yourselves, your families, and your communities during this difficult time.

Jay A. Perman, Chancellor, University System of Maryland

Aminta Breaux, President, Bowie State University

Anthony Jenkins, President, Coppin State University

Ronald Nowaczyk, President, Frostburg State University

Charles Wight, President, Salisbury University

Kim Schatzel, President, Towson University

Kurt Schmoke, President, University of Baltimore

Bruce E. Jarrell, Interim President, University of Maryland, Baltimore

Freeman A. Hrabowski III, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Peter Goodwin, President, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science

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