

Caring and Support



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To: Hshsl-All Staff



Dear All;

The last few days have been hard. As if the COVID-19 pandemic wasn't enough, our nation has been rocked by the specter of hateful and systemic racism raising its head...again. I can't begin to tell you how upsetting this is to me. I have read things and seen things that have shaken me to the core with disbelief over the cruelty, inhumanity, and stupidity. This is not the America I grew up believing in although I have known for a long time there is a dark side of hatred always waiting below the surface. I thought it was under control. And I have always believed things would get better if good people worked to make it so. But something has been unleashed, empowering and enabling certain groups of people to do their worst, and act with impunity – terrorizing, bullying, and killing. As a liberal white person it is way too easy to ignore these things because I don't have to live with it every day. I can write checks and donate money to causes. I can wound people with my razor sharp wit. I can claim black friends. I have white privilege. I have never been afraid to take a walk just because of the color of my skin. I have never been afraid to go for a run in a community. I have never had a policeman question me rudely or threaten me, let alone put a knee on my neck for 9 minutes. And I certainly don't know what it is like to have that stress beating on me day after day, all my life, affecting mental and physical health because of the color of my skin. I have white privilege. And the good thing is, I will never have that experience. But so many do and we are all the lesser for it. It has to change.

This isn't about me. This is about us. In our Health Sciences and Human Services Library, I want all of us to stand in solidarity for justice, fairness, and equality, appreciating and treasuring all the gifts we bring to our library community and beyond, celebrating the contributions all of us make. I want us to be safe and feel valued. As long as I am director I will work to make it so. Our Diversity Task Force begins its work this week and it will need all of our energy to make it meaningful. We all need to care about each other. We need to stand together. We need to take it into the world around us confronting and calling out oppression, prejudice, and racism wherever we see it. We cannot be complicit in our silence. And we need to do it now.

Thanks for listening – be safe and feel loved.

M.J.

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