

## Call to Action - Address Systematic Racism across the University of California

Dear Board of Regents, President Napolitano, and President-elect Drake:

We are writing in our capacities as leadership of Black Affinity Groups throughout the University of California. From Davis to San Diego, our organizations have worked to lift every voice and support each other in times of unprecedented worry and stress nationally and globally. The resulting work has led to many difficult conversations in and beyond our groups and within the UC system. We stand with our students, staff, faculty, and alumni who believe in dismantling systems that nourish white supremacy, anti-Black racism, and inequities against intersectional Black lives.

Every day we do our best to show up for work, despite understanding that COVID-19 has [disproportionately impacted our communities](#). Additionally, over the past weeks, the proliferation of news highlighting the plight of unjust police brutality plagues us. In this current reality, many of us are triple taxed as we attempt to care for our own mental well-being, support our families and loved ones that are harboring a range of emotions, as well as prioritize the goals of the university. We show up to work and give our best efforts, which at this time requires tending to the insecurities and guilt of many of our white colleagues. This letter is a call to action for allies who understand the systemic violence that has led to dozens of protests across the United States. We are psychologically, physically, and spiritually exhausted from the anti-Black racism and violence in America that all too often rears its head on University of California campuses.

Despite this, we are confident and determined to press on, and see this moment in history as an opportunity to celebrate and fully recognize and uplift Black life. Considering this, we are requesting the University take systemwide concrete and measurable actions related to the health and wellbeing of its Black Faculty, Staff, and Students.

As a collective we are requesting the Board of Regents along with the current and incoming President establish and implement :

1. A formal Zero Tolerance policy on racism
  - a. Survey of the entire UC community to understand how all Black employees experience current campus climates including the Office of the President
  - b. Mandatory annual professional learning opportunities focusing on Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Accountability for executives, staff and academic appointees, plus 2 hours of completed training for all new supervisors
  - c. Revise the current UC non-discrimination policy to provide greater protection and direction surrounding racism and other forms of mistreatment targeted towards underrepresented communities
  - d. Implement a systemwide reporting mechanism to address biases, microaggressions, and other harms that impact the climate, workplace, and learning environment

2. A commitment to transparency which includes the disaggregation and dissemination of data with respect to race and gender while adequately addressing the dearth of Black/African-American representation at all levels of the organization
  - a. Establish an annual Diversity and Inclusion Report for UC's entire workforce campuses, Agriculture and National Resources and medical centers ( to include laboratory, technical and non-technical positions, and non-exempt employees)
3. The creation of a systemwide task force to address staffing concerns specific to Black employees and then the implementation of corrective measures to address those concerns by developing specific measurable goals in the area of:
  - a. Hiring and Recruitment
  - b. Retention
  - c. Succession Planning
  - d. Mentoring and Professional Development Program
  - e. Establish and implement a Recruiting and Hiring Toolkit for a more diverse UC workforce
4. Issue and support a resolution declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis within the state and UC's Medical Centers. The link between racism and health outcomes are widely known. These measures should not be enacted without the representation and participation of the impacted communities. Specific actions include:
  - a. Establish and fund a systemwide Health framework within all UC Medical Centers to ensure Black patients receive equal treatment and equal care
  - b. Conduct a systemwide SWOT analysis to identify and correct implicit racial bias, and "well intentioned" but harmful policies and practices within UC's medical community
  - c. Identify and partner with healthcare providers and other community based organizations to address and combat negative health outcomes such as:
    - i. Black maternal death rates
    - ii. Black infant mortality rates
    - iii. Childhood trauma
    - iv. COVID19 health disparities and impacts
5. A review of funding for Black Affinity Groups throughout the UC system which have been chronically underfunded and yet bare a huge portion of the burden in supporting not only Black faculty, staff, and students' professional development, health and wellbeing initiatives, and other critical needs, but also supporting all UC employees and the overall work environment within the UC system.
  - a. Implement Executive Sponsorship for all UC systemwide Black employee groups at the campuses and medical centers
  - b. Utilization of Affinity groups for job recruitment, application screening, RFP procurement committees, and candidate selection committees, post hire retention
  - c. The expansion of support for Black Faculty and Staff at a systemwide level throughout the UC including the expansion of the UC Black Administrator's Council and creation and funding of an Operational [System Wide Level Black Affinity Group](#)
6. The creation of a task force on Policing on campuses to discuss and assess how university police departments should evolve to look, operate and engage with campus communities

- a. Implement a systemwide action plan to address racial profiling and other forms of mistreatment by security personnel and law enforcement employed and/or contracted by the University of California
7. An increase of Black representation on the University of California Board of Regents and the respective Boards of Trustees for each UC Campus.
8. Funding for healing and wellness resources aimed at the UC Black Community of Students, Faculty, and Staff to include
  - a. An expansion of wellness services through student health, employee health, and the student and faculty/staff assistance programs utilizing trained providers who specialize in Black mental health and culturally congruent care
  - b. Support for existing services that are currently supporting the wellness and mental health needs for the Black community
9. Support for the observation of Juneteenth as a paid holiday
  - a. Juneteenth is historically significant: it is the oldest annual commemoration of the end of slavery, beginning when the last Black slaves were freed on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1865. Juneteenth is nationally recognized: it is honored as a state holiday or special day of observance in 47 of the 50 states, including California. Juneteenth is a day of festivity and reflection on Black Americans achievements, history, journey, and continued fight for freedom. Juneteenth has also begun the process of recognition on a state level both in New York and Virginia, as well as a number of private companies.
  - b. A resolution endorsed by the UC Board of Regents would be a strong affirmation of support for the efforts to make Juneteenth a paid state and national holiday.
  - c. Support for the day to be observed as a day of service by the University community.

The University of California has historically taken pride in uplifting People of Color across all demographic lines and most recently your [unanimous support of Assembly Constitutional Amendment 5](#) and the [confirmation of the University's first Black President](#) in over 150 years, shows the university's willingness to champion efforts in diversity and inclusion. In this spirit, we implore you to take the lead in supporting and celebrating Black lives in and beyond our state by taking action on the points noted above.

We are eager to engage you further on this in the future. We look forward to receiving a written response to include a plan for a formal meeting to discuss next steps.

**UC Black Affinity Group Leaders:**

Dennis McIver, 2019-20 Chair, UC Riverside Black Faculty and Staff Association

Charron Andrus, Chair UC Davis Health African American Faculty and Staff Association

Danica Fisher, Chair UC Davis African American Faculty and Staff Association

Latascha Magness-Cotton and Ghanya C. Thomas, Co-chairs UCOP Black Staff and Faculty Organization

LaMisha Hill, PhD, Chair The Black Caucus at UC San Francisco

Latascha Magness-Cotton and Ghanya Thomas, Co-Chairs UC Office of the President Black Staff & Faculty Organization

Chanel Parrish, Chair UC Riverside Black Faculty and Staff Association  
Tammy Blevins, Chair UC San Diego Black Staff Association  
Katya Armistead, Aaron Jones, Kareen Louis, Marcus Mathis, Meridith Merchant, Latrece Seneca,  
Founders ucsbBLACK Steering Committee

**Campus Organization Support:**

UC Davis Health African American Faculty and Staff Association  
UC Riverside Black Faculty and Staff Association Executive Committee  
UC Davis African American Faculty and Staff Association  
The Black Caucus at UC San Francisco (est. 1968)  
UC Office of the President Black Staff & Faculty Organization  
UC San Diego Black Staff Association  
UC Santa Barbara ucsbBLACK Steering Committee

**National Organization Support:**

Capital City Black Nurses Association

**Individual Support:**

LeChé McGill, UC Agriculture and Natural Resources

cc: Chancellors of each UC