

June 8, 2020

Dear NCE Community,

Earlier this week, NLU President Nivine Megahed wrote to the NLU community expressing our outrage and despair over the scourge of racism in contemporary America. The National College of Education stands together, resolutely and empathically, against the systemic and institutional racism that has led to the appalling acts of violence against Black people and communities. We are home to a longstanding tradition of social justice and equity in education. Now we must accelerate and expand on that work and renew our commitment to the principles that have undergirded NCE since its founding.

No words can appropriately comfort those who grieve in so many different ways for so many different reasons, and who feel deep and justified anger at the inequities baked into our society and economic systems. Another letter is inadequate—many others have written far more eloquently and expertly. What we do know: we must find ways to act determinedly, individually and collectively, to create a new future. It will be challenging work, and it will take time; it will not be easy or comfortable. But from the suffering of the past days and the years leading up to it, we can find opportunities emerging to listen, imagine, unite, disrupt, and rebuild. We must do so much more, and we will do so.

Our leadership team, faculty and staff are coming together to focus on dismantling the complex systems that have led to normalizing racism and will work in collaboration with our students as well as with our PK-12 school and community partners. We will challenge our own biases and assumptions.

We will create safe spaces for student and community voices, and redouble our efforts to create supportive learning environments for all students, especially those who have been hurt the most by the current systems of inequality and racism. Many members of our community have taken and are taking concrete steps to combat racial injustice: we need to build on and support that good work.

Jamilah Pitts writes about teaching as an act of resistance and an act of healing. You—our students, alumni, faculty, staff and partners—are change agents. We all have opportunities to find ways to heal, and to create a society that reflects our best vision.

We do not have all the answers, and our action to date has not been sufficient. We are committed to the serious work for racial justice that we have begun. There is nothing more important than these fundamental human rights.



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