

## **A Joint Statement from the Round Table Leadership**

### **Acknowledging this moment:**

The protests across the U.S., the world, and in our own community are about broken promises in America. We need to say their names, David McAtee, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery,. And before them, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice.... Josiah Lawson. And so many before them.

The protests are about more than police brutality, they are about inequality in every facet of American opportunity.... in healthcare, in housing, in food distribution, in clean air/water/and open spaces, in due process, and in education. And these are not outcomes from passive actions that happen in American life, but from an historic and structural barring of access that is purposeful and which does harm to Black communities everywhere.

African American leaders across every profession speak to these inequities through the lense of their profession, but also from a personal level about how the recurrence of trauma affects them, their family, their children, and their communities. Our colleagues and students of color have shared these experiences as well - right here on our own campus and in our community.

This is a time to listen, to learn, to speak out, to engage, and to support one-another. And we also need to take action. From wherever we stand in relationship to these issues, whether from a place of privilege or a place of targeted oppression, we must each reflect on our position, both personal and professional, and determine where our next best step forward is. And we must each be determined to take that step, and the next step, and the next. Each as individuals, and as colleagues, for the betterment of one another.

### **Acknowledging Each Other**

We want to thank you all for being here and continuing to focus on serving students, especially in these increasingly uncertain and painful times. Our nation is sick. Sick with a global pandemic that is disproportionately affecting people of color, long standing racial injustice, and anti-Blackness that literally kills people in the streets, in prisons and detention centers, and on their ancestral lands. As a society, and as an institution, we have a lot of work to do. Together, we can support each other, call out injustices, hold people and the institution accountable, and help our students navigate the system while learning how to change it.

We must also acknowledge that the brunt of this work is too often shouldered by our colleagues of color, and that white silence perpetuates systemic inequality. For those of us who have

skin-privilege, this remains a time to listen and to learn, but also a time to speak out, to engage, and to challenge within White spaces.

### **Acknowledging our Work for Students**

These Roundtables are a time for us to come together, share information and learn from our colleagues about the tasks that we do to support students. There are times, like now, where these tasks seem insignificant and discussing them seems to turn a deaf ear to the reality facing our colleagues, our students and our society. We want to acknowledge this.

We also want to acknowledge that through your work and support, our students make strides towards their personal, professional, and economic advancement through the attainment of their college degree. And so we continue. By fully understanding the tasks and the process, we can serve our students best, and prepare for the next generation of students.