



Dear Members of the Johns Hopkins Community,

In the past three months, across the U.S. and around the globe, we have experienced extraordinary challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In communities of which Johns Hopkins is a part—from Baltimore City, Washington, D.C., Prince George’s, Howard and Montgomery Counties to St. Petersburg, Florida, and many more—we have witnessed our African American, Latinx, Native American and poverty-stricken communities disproportionately dying from COVID-19, while our Asian and Asian American communities have been targeted with vitriol because of the disease’s origins. People have lost family members, and the economic impact of this pandemic has led to many people having lost their jobs.

This has been a tremendous burden for many to bear. The recent death of George Floyd in Minneapolis as well as the deaths of Breonna Taylor, a first responder in Louisville, Kentucky, shot in her own bed while sleeping; Ahmaud Arbery, shot while jogging near Brunswick, Georgia; and far too many others reinforce the brutal truth that the African American community still remains vulnerable to senseless violence, even during a pandemic. For those of us in Baltimore, these tragedies also call to mind the death of Freddie Gray while in police custody five years ago. And this moment serves as a reminder of the compounding effects on our communities.

Because we are all intricately connected by our common humanity, if one segment of our community is hurting, it adversely impacts all of us. This is not just an issue for African Americans; it is an issue that threatens the future for all Americans.

We hear the needs of the Johns Hopkins community to have an honest dialogue about these issues and develop steps to address them through our daily activities and relationships, scholarship and teaching, and health care delivery and leadership. We must acknowledge that these vulnerabilities to violence and health crises faced by black and brown communities are born out of continued racial disparities in education, employment, housing, and criminal justice. To that end, under the leadership of the JHM Office of Diversity and Inclusion and in collaboration with other groups across Johns Hopkins, we will host a Journeys in Healing symposium series, “The Language of the Unheard: A Virtual Town Hall on Racial Injustice,” in early June. More details will follow once dates have been solidified.

We also recognize and acknowledge the anguish that these recent incidents are causing for our faculty, students, staff, trainees and alumni across the Johns Hopkins family. We encourage you to access the many supportive services available. At JHM, [these services](#) include mySupport, Spiritual Care and Chaplaincy, the [Office of Well-Being](#), the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and the [JHM Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#). University affiliates can reach out to [mySupport](#), find student wellness resources at <https://wellness.jhu.edu> or on the [Student Outreach and Support](#) site, or contact the Office of Institutional Equity for assistance.

During this time of immense challenge, let us work together to be a light to facilitate education, healing, connection, support and service to each other and to our community.

Sincerely,

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