



CAL STATE EAST BAY

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY

If one of us, then all of us: A statement asking for grace, compassion and togetherness

What happens to one happens to us all. It was nearly a year ago when we first witnessed, with horror, the public murder of George Floyd. Now we write to you again in response to the guilty verdicts in the trial of the police officer who knelt on his neck.

The cumulative impact of the circumstances of the past year has worked to compound weariness and dimming of hope. The anti-Blackness, the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, the political rhetoric that helped to further stoke anti-Asian hate and violence, incarcerated immigrants, the Atlanta shooting targeting Asian women, the anti-transgender legislation, the voter suppression efforts, and most recently, the killing of Daunte Wright.

The reality is that this is not the first letter to the campus that has been written expressing solidarity, recognition of shared sorrow and impact, and words of hope and encouragement. We know that many of us wake up holding our breath or dread getting a notification by phone, TV or social media that announces yet another tragedy.

All of this has occurred while we are coping with the economic, mental, physical and emotional drain of the pandemic. These examples are by no means exhaustive, yet they illustrate that there have been countless reasons for exhaustion and grief in the last year. For some, it may be daily and excruciating, for others it may be on the periphery of our lives via the media, colleagues or extended social circles.

We want to publicly state that this moment is, for many in our community, emotionally too much. We want to recognize that many of us are experiencing fear, trauma, grief, and overwhelm. We see this and acknowledge the pain. For those who don't hold any of the identities that we've mentioned but are experiencing grief and a sense of helplessness, we see you in our collective struggle because you are an integral part of us. Again, what happens to one, happens to us all.

In a few minutes, you will receive an invitation for a community care space co-hosted by the Office of Diversity and Student Health & Counseling Services. Ongoing, students have access to **counseling services** through Student Health & Counseling Services. Faculty and staff can turn to the **Employee Assistance Program** (EAP), as well as your healthcare provider.

Please be present today, giving grace and compassion to one another. Be mindful that emotions do not show up in everyone the same ways that they do within ourselves. Let us be a community that centers all of us and let us help each other navigate this moment.

With gratitude for each of you,

Cathy Sandeen

Kimberly Baker-Flowers

President University

Diversity Officer

April 20, 2021