

Subject: ASCCC: Special Message from the President

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From: ASCCC Communications

To: Isaac Escoto



Special Message from the President

Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Nina Pop, D'Andre Campbell, Tony McDade, Regis Korchini-Paquet, Ahmaud Arbery, Jordan Baker, Victor White III, Keith Lamont Scott, Dontre Hamilton...

I send you this message with a heavy heart. I spent this weekend once again talking about systemic racism and oppression with my children as they try to make sense of the news and the harsh realities of our country. We started with the immediate facts: who was George Floyd and what happened, that no one deserves to be choked to death in police custody. We talked about police officers – that most are probably good people. We talked about stereotypes and assumptions our society embeds in every message we consume since birth, such as that Black men are dangerous and not to be trusted, and that we have to recognize and acknowledge our assumptions and stereotypes if we are to address them. When my son, a sixteen year-old LatinX young man, said, “That’s why you don’t like me wearing big sweatshirts with the hood up when we go out in public,” it broke my heart. And I told him yes, that is why, and although it should not matter what you wear or look like, in this America it does. To quote a wise woman in my life who counsels me about raising children of color, “We want our babies to live.” We have to acknowledge that they will deal with systemic racism and oppression. When a group of white men can protest in Sacramento with guns at the capitol but black pro football players lose their jobs for taking a knee in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, we can see the reality of the racism and oppression in our system.

...Michael Brown, Larry Jackson Jr., Jonathan Ferrell, Sean Reed, Steven Demarco Taylor, Ariane McCree, Terrance Franklin, Miles Hall, William Green, Alton Sterling, Eric Garner, Philando Castile, Sandra Bland...

Everyone on this ongoing list of names was someone's baby who did not live through an encounter with the police. They are our neighbors, our brothers, our children, and our students. According to [PBS News Hour](#), the lifetime risk of Black boys and men being killed by the police is 96 deaths per 100,000, compared to 39 deaths per 100,000 for white boys and men.

...Trayvon Martin, Samuel David Mallard, Tamir Rice, Botham Shem Jean, E.J. Branford, Antwon Rose, Stephon Clark, Natosha "Tony" McDade, Freddie Gray, Brendon Glenn, John Crawford III...

The [ASCCC Inclusivity Statement](#) speaks to our commitment. We adopted this statement in Fall 2019 by acclamation. We said, in part, *[E]mbracing diversity means that we must intentionally practice acceptance and respect towards one another and understand that discrimination and prejudices create and sustain privileges for some while creating and sustaining disadvantages for others. In order to embrace diversity, we also acknowledge that institutional discrimination and implicit bias exist and that our goal is to eradicate those elements from our system. Our commitment to diversity requires that we strive to eliminate those barriers to equity and that we act deliberately to create a safe and inclusive environment where individual and group differences are valued and leveraged for our growth and understanding as an educational community.* The time has come to act on this commitment.

...Yassin Mohamed, Wendell Allen, Finan H. Berhe, Darius Tarver, Kwame "KK" Jones, De'von Bailey, Christopher Witfield, Anthony Hill, Micheal Brown, Ezell Ford, Dante Parker...

Also in Fall 2019, the ASCCC passed a resolution that states that we [Support Infusing Anti-Racism/No-Hate Education in Community Colleges](#), that

[T]o eliminate institutional discrimination, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges strives to do the following:

1. *To integrate an accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of all groups throughout history across curricula, particularly groups that have been underrepresented historically,*
2. *To identify how bias, stereotyping, and discrimination have limited the roles and contributions of individuals and groups and how these limitations have challenged and continue to challenge our society,*
3. *To encourage all members of the educational community to examine assumptions and prejudices, including but not limited to racism, sexism, and homophobia, that might limit the opportunities and growth of students and employees,*
4. *To offer positive and diverse role models in our society, including the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of diverse employees in community colleges,*
5. *To coordinate with organizations and concerned agencies that promote the contributions, heritage, culture, history, and health and care needs of diverse population groups, and*
6. *To promote a safe and inclusive environment for all; and*

Whereas, Racism and racial discrimination threaten human development because of the obstacles that they pose to the fulfillment to basic human rights to survival, security, development, and social participation, because racism has been shown to have negative cognitive, behavioral, affective, and relational effects on both child and adult victims nationally and globally, historically and contemporarily, and because racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance have been shown to be attitudes and behaviors that are

learned;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges denounce racism for its negative psychological, social, educational, and economic effects on human development throughout the lifespan;

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, to eliminate institutional discrimination, take steps to not only strive for a greater knowledge about and the celebration of diversity but also to support deeper training that reveals the inherent racism embedded in societal institutions in the United States, including the educational system, and asks individuals to examine their personal role in the support of racist structures and the commitment to work to dismantle structural racism; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges infuse Anti- Racism/No Hate Education in all its activities and professional development opportunities to the degree that doing so is feasible.

This resolution offers the advice and judgment of the faculty of the California community colleges. Now is the time to put these words into practice.

...Eric Logan, Kendrec McDade, Jamarion Robinson, Gregory Hill Jr., JaQuavion Slaton, Ryan Twyman, Brandon Webber, Kajieme Powell, Laquan McDonald, Mario Woods, Jimmy Atchison...

I realize that asking academic senate presidents who may be facilitating their first meeting in August to act on these principles is difficult and requires a vulnerability that may be uncomfortable. The following are some ideas for what you can do with an agenda that is two or three months away. Publishing a tentative agenda and asking for additional items in advance is permissible and can ensure the voices raised across our country now are meaningful.

1. Make a tentative agenda now that includes a

discussion of anti-racism/no-hate education.

Remember, you do not have to have an answer to start a conversation.

2. Prioritize culturally responsive curricular redesign with your curriculum committee.
3. Acknowledge, without assigning blame, that the structure of the college houses the biases and prejudices of its founding time. Those biases have privileged some and disadvantaged others, particularly African-American and LatinX communities.
4. Prioritize the evaluation of hiring and evaluation processes.
5. Request services from the ASCCC about any of these topics [here](#).
6. Evaluate your academic senate and find the voices among your faculty missing in governance. Find ways to empower those voices.
7. Work with your administration and students to find constructive ways students can express themselves about these deaths and the structural and historical biases that exist.

...Willie McCoy, D'etrick Griffin, Jemel Roberson, DeAndre Ballard, Botham Shem Jean, Robert Lawrence White, Akai Gurley, Romain Brisbon, Charly Keunang, Anthony Lamar Smith...

Our country is protesting systemic oppression and racism that is most horrifically exemplified in this endless list of dead African-Americans. Find ways to lift these voices and carry them into the next term. Use this effort as the impetus to address and educate ourselves and our students and change the parts of our systems we have the power to change. This is a call to action.

In solidarity,



John Stankas



Academic Senate for California Community Colleges
One Capitol Mall, Suite 230
Sacramento, CA 95814

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