

**STUDENT ASSEMBLY BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE COLLEGE CULTURE
SUMMER INITIATIVE**

STATEMENT ON BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTESTS

JUNE 1, 2020

To the Hamilton Community,

We stand in solidarity with the victims of racism, the Black Lives Matter movement protestors, and with our Black, Indigenous, peoples of color at Hamilton College. We stand with George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Ahmaud Arbery, Sandra Bland, and the countless other Black individuals who have lost their lives to hate and police violence. As a community, we mourn these lives. We recognize the fact that the Black individuals who have been murdered by the police and by the state is not a political issue to stay neutral on, as the two sides are marked clearly: the side of the oppressor and the side of the people. We believe that this is a human rights issue, a dangerous violation issued by our country, and that this is something we cannot stay quiet on.

Racism and white supremacy have been a foundational building block of American history, tracing back to years of colonialism. Racism is embedded in our systems, in our cities, in our institutions, and in the history of our college itself. This is the history we need to acknowledge in order to enact change in the present and future.

The past week there have been a number of Black Lives Matter protests across the nation speaking out against the police brutality and white supremacy present in our systems. We have a long history of brave protestors standing up against acts of senseless violence by police and the systems of oppression that continue subjecting BIPOC time and time again, and we will continue supporting the protestors in their fight.

We urge you all to look over the document that the Black and Latinx Student Union and the Feminists of Color Collective have worked hard to put together, as it contains donation and petition links, anti-racism literature suggestions, protest tips, and legal resources for protestors. In solidarity, we are listening and are advocating for the lives of our Black students, for the lives of the victims, and for the lives of their families and communities being affected by the violence enacted by our state and by the racist individuals that uphold it. As a campus, we need to acknowledge the privilege that most of us hold and use it to support the Black community in addressing systemic racism, internalized beliefs on racism, explicit as well as implicit bias, and so on. That privilege is not a burden, but rather an opportunity to protect and advocate for Black lives.



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Although the Assembly is not a functioning body during the summer, we find it necessary to provide a response. We have the responsibility to support the students who feel alienated on their own campus and to protect them against racism and forms of oppression. We have a responsibility to be anti-racist. This is not a political issue, this is a human rights issue.

Please reach out to your BIPOC peers during these times, as we need to rely on each other and provide support. Call or text them, as we need to reinforce and embrace our community and the BIPOC who make our campus amazing.

We recognize that this statement is not enough to combat racism and that we as a community need to take steps forward in the movement for Black lives and to be actively anti-racist. This is a continual process that we all need to constantly be aware of and constantly educating ourselves on these issues. Our work as a community and as elected officials does not end here. We make a commitment to not forget about this issue when these protests end, but to keep it as the center of our everyday work.

In solidarity,

Building an Inclusive College Culture Summer Initiative

