

A statement from Marilyn Thompson,  
Interim Director of the Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics:

The Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics offers a communal embrace to all Black students, postdocs, staff, faculty, and members of our broader society who are experiencing individual and collective trauma intensified by the horrific murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many other Black people in America who have been victims of systemic racism and violence. We care about you, and we acknowledge your pain and grief.

As a society, we have failed thus far to dismantle structural racism and reform our institutions in ways that effectively address racial inequities. The COVID-19 pandemic has further laid bare many of our nation's glaring inequities, evidenced by disparities in health status and access to health care, in who has lost jobs or has had to continue working in environments without adequate protection, and in death rates.

Abhorrent, too, are the daily injustices, harassment, and indignities our Black students, colleagues, friends, family members, and neighbors endure. To say that the pain and suffering — both in the moment and cumulatively due to generations of racism — is enormous is an understatement.

*To all Black members of our community and beyond: I am joined by many white and non-Black people of color in our Sanford School community in standing in solidarity with you and the Black Lives Matter movement. We affirm the dignity of Black lives and the importance of normalizing Black excellence. We stand ready to bear witness, and we accept the personal and collective responsibility of educating ourselves and fighting racism in all forms.*

We have tremendous opportunities to be agents of change. Your voices and expertise are critical. Many of you are already deeply engaged in research and/or advocacy in ways that combat and inform our understanding of racism and inequality, and others have expressed a desire to learn more about how to contribute and be a better ally. We are committed to supporting both ongoing and new efforts toward these aims in the Sanford School. To inform our next steps, we encourage you to share ideas, useful resources, and/or offers of assistance by emailing [SanfordSocial@asu.edu](mailto:SanfordSocial@asu.edu).

Finally, many of us are feeling exhausted and raw in these times. Please take time to care physically and mentally for yourselves and to reach out to each other. Don't hesitate to contact me if I can support you in any way.