



June 8, 2020

Dear Members of the Bentley Community,

As we begin a new week, we write in solidarity as the academic leadership team to affirm the dignity and humanity of our Black students, faculty, and staff. Some of you may have joined the Town Hall on Racial Injustice that we hosted on Friday with faculty and staff; others may have participated in the webinar that student leaders in Black United Body (BUB) coordinated. At both events, it was evident that we can and need to do more as a community to address issues of systemic racism. It was also a clear reminder that our language is important, and we are unequivocal in demonstrating to our Bentley community that **Black Lives Matter**.

We acknowledge our Black and Brown colleagues who shared their stories of discrimination, exhaustion, and pain during Friday's Town Hall meeting. Those faculty and staff who spoke displayed courage and honesty as they offered insights into their lived experiences; they placed a spotlight on some of the tenets of privilege for those of us who are not members of underrepresented racial communities. Those tenets of privilege include, but are not limited to: not worrying that we will be a spokesperson for our race when we speak, not fearing for our wellbeing when we are pulled over or confronted by a police officer, not feeling like it is incumbent upon us to call out micro- and macroaggressions, not engaging in conversations about diversity and inclusion to preserve our own comfort, and not having to suppress our rage and hopelessness when we witness the systems that are designed to protect us continue to fail us.

Let us be clear: the burden does not remain on our Black students and colleagues to tell our community that change is required. The stories we heard on Friday remind us that the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery are outcomes of a broader, deeper system of racism, and that countless other Black lives have been impacted and ended by that system. That same system upholds the inequities that our faculty and staff of color experience on a daily basis on Bentley's campus and in communities across the country. We have an opportunity to closely examine our own systems at Bentley, and we have the obligation to use this moment to create substantive changes to our practices. Of course, the changes will take time and effort; however, we know that if people create systems, people can also dismantle and reimagine systems.

As a leadership team, **we strive to make clear to Black students, faculty, and staff that their lives, their bodies, their trauma, and their experiences matter.** We plan to do this, in part, by committing to the following:



BENTLEY UNIVERSITY

1. To educate ourselves on topics of race and racism in the United States, not by relying on Black colleagues or students to teach us, but through ongoing learning and exploration of existing materials. There is an abundance of available resources, and we can start by reviewing [this reading list](#) or [this collection](#) of websites and databases.
2. To recognize that each of us carries bias that upholds racism, and to engage in the self-reflection and practice necessary to tease out and shift those biases.
3. To speak up and disrupt moments when we witness racist jokes or behaviors, regardless of whether there are Black people around us.
4. To create learning environments that welcome Black students. For those spaces that have historically ostracized Black students, we will make a concerted effort to reach out and repair those relationships.
5. To cultivate offices and departments in which Black faculty and staff understand their value and no longer question if their voices are taken seriously.

We ask that you join us in this commitment. If you feel that you can help us further these goals, please click [HERE](#) to find a copy of this letter and add your name to the list of those who have signed below.

Later this week, the Office of the Provost will send an email inviting members of the community to be part of a Task Force on Racial Justice. That group will offer recommendations for specific, tactical actions that we can take as a university to address the issue of systemic racism and its byproducts on our campus. We have work to do, and we know that one task force will not resolve every issue that stems from centuries of injustice. Our efforts must be ongoing and interwoven with our institutional values and mission. We believe firmly in making Bentley a leader for promoting equity and inclusion, and we thank you for your help in moving us toward that reality.

Cordially,

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