

August 13, 2020

The atrocities of the recent weeks and months have laid at our feet the bloodstained evidence of our nation's legacy of hate toward our Black/African American brothers and sisters. Our history is steeped in oppression from the swift and almost complete eradication of this land's indigenous peoples to the unrelenting and insidious massacre of our nation's people of color. The merciless murder of George Floyd at the hands of police devastated entire communities of every color and retraumatized the Black/African American community for whom, tragically, this is all too familiar. Furthermore, the callous indifference on the face of the murderer enraged millions and served as a call to action. Action against violent injustice, social oppression, racial divides, implicit bias, and the silence that enables it.

The Pasadena City College Disabled Students Programs & Services (DSP&S) will stay silent no longer. Our hearts go out to all whose lives have been touched by the tragedy of recent events and whose lived experiences have been scarred by institutional racism and oppression. Although many of us can never truly know what you go through, we strive to understand, we acknowledge your pain, we share in your outrage and raise our hands in solidarity.

The DSP&S mission has always been to remove obstacles to educational opportunities that would prevent students with disabilities from participating. We value respect, equity and justice. Where there are barriers we provide access. Where there is ignorance we educate. These efforts are well-intentioned but not intentional enough. It is not enough to react to individual situations of inequity. We must seek to prevent inequity from ever gaining a foothold in our programs, systems and institutions.

We will start by engaging with students and colleagues in meaningful conversations about race and social justice that will inform changes to long-standing practices and policies that have hindered and segregated communities, students, staff and faculty and seek innovation of new methods that better reflect our commitment to anti-racism and equity.

We are committed to stand by those who have been aggrieved, protect and lift up those who stand up for them, and build camaraderie based on authentic and mutual respect. By living this commitment, we hope to earn the trust placed in our Program by students of color who come to us seeking services. To current and future students we say...

you are NOT alone and we are HERE for YOU!

Sincerely,
PCC Disabled Students Programs & Services department