



UNIVERSITY of
SOUTH FLORIDA

Student Success

Office of Multicultural Affairs

Dear Students,

The acts of racism, police brutality, and murders that have taken place against Black people across the country are horrific. The root of these brutalities trace back to the founding of this country. The ideology of white supremacy is evident and the dismantling of this systemic cancer is an exhaustive battle and demands for justice shouldn't be bared alone.

The side by side image of Colin Kaepernick kneeling in civil protest of police brutality and the photo of Derek Chauvin kneeling on the throat of George Floyd present a stark and sobering contrast only further reinforces Kaepernick's original message. The dueling conversation around the details of each of those images further magnified the country's divide. The anguish resulting from the unjust deaths of George Floyd and countless others compounded by racism both systemic and performative is a burden too great to carry alone. All of this mental and physical devastation is for then exasperated as we continue to navigate the challenges of global pandemic which is proven to disproportionately impact the black community while also elevating feelings of isolation and anxiety of our students.

As some USF students plan to take part in protests and demonstrations while others process alone, your safety and well-being remain paramount. We at the OMA want to highlight helpful resources from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to know your rights in protest and encourage seeking out support from our USF Counseling Center.

Please know that we see you, we hear you, and we are here to provide an outlet of support and solidarity. We also seek your feedback as to how we can best support you through these unimaginable times in a virtual platform and how we can better strengthen the support for Black students in OMA as we return to campus in the fall. Your calls for justice and action are heard and will never be silenced in our space. As imperfect humans, a department, and as an institution we may not always meet expectations, but we will continue to stand with our students, staff, and faculty through the pain, denounce injustice, and advocate for your safety and wellness. We will be a better and stronger community because of you. Each individual in OMA is here to serve students, and if that can be done differently or better, we welcome that feedback.

As we look to continue to expand our staff this summer, filling roles such as the Coordinator of Cultural Initiatives, the Assistant Director for Diversity Education, and Graduate Assistant for Diversity Education this will strengthen our ability to better serve our students, and better meet your needs.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stacy Pippen".

Director, Office of Multicultural Affairs
University of South Florida - Tampa

May 30, 2020