

Dear Brandeis Community,

First and foremost, Black lives matter. This is an undeniable truth. Current events, however, have made it clear that racism, largely directed at members of our nation's black community, is alive in America. Racism is a wicked and powerful force that has the potential to negatively influence our present at the detriment of our future. Acts of racism stands against the inalienable rights we all share and pillars of equality and justice for all people.

Our community is saddened, angry and frustrated over the recent killing of George Floyd, and others who have lost their lives, because of senseless police brutality. The images we have seen on the news, both of George Floyd's murder and of the police response to protesters, have been disturbing, shocking, and heartbreaking. Yet, we must not turn a blind eye and instead we must unequivocally acknowledge that institutionalized racism in our country is a serious problem we have not adequately addressed. This is a problem that is bigger than our academic community at Brandeis, but that does not mean that we cannot act. Together we have what it takes to push society in a more equitable direction.

In order to work towards justice and denounce racism we the Diverse Brandeis Scholars and Black Graduate Student Association have drafted this email to discuss where we have succeeded as a community and where we can improve. We have succeeded as a community because we are here. We are people of color, we are women, we are queer, we are diverse and at Brandeis, we celebrate our differences on equal ground. The Diverse Brandeis Scholars group and Black Graduate Student Association are testament to the success of our academic communities' opposition to racism. To continue our growth, we must acknowledge where we fall short. We want to extend an invitation to all the members of our community to reflect on the current events and think about what we can do as individuals and as a society to move forward together. This is the time to think about your biases, your role in society, and how you can stop perpetuating racism. This is an opportunity to listen to the voices that need to be heard.

Included below you will find a series of steps you can take to help, including a list of bail out community funds for those interested in helping.

Sincerely,

Diverse Brandeis Scholars and Black Graduate Student Association

What actions can YOU take to help?

1. Join the global movement: <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>
2. Take a look at bail funds in your state and support the cause. A simple google search is all it takes. A few are listed below as examples.
3. Google whether your local police departments currently outfits all on-duty officers with a body camera and requires for said camera to be on immediately when responding to a police call. If they don't, write a letter to your local government and police chief to advocate for it. Spread the word, and have others join in the cause as well.
4. Donate to anti-supremacy work: (NAACP, United Negro College Fund, National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls, etc.).
5. Take a moment to do some introspection. Reflect on your own biases, and make changes accordingly.
6. Support black businesses and schools. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are an important part of black culture and should have the same support as other universities.
7. Petition, call, or write to senators to reduce mandatory sentencing minimums.

Los Angeles, The Bail Project:

<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/the-bail-project>

New York, Brooklyn Community Bail Fund:

<https://brooklynbailfund.org/donate>

Atlanta, Atlanta Solidarity Fund:

<https://actionnetwork.org/fundraising/contribute-to-the-atlanta-solidarity-fund>

Philadelphia, Philly Bail Fund:

<https://www.phillybailfund.org/donate>

Columbus, Columbus Freedom Fund:

<https://www.facebook.com/CFFOhio/>

Chicago, Chicago Community Bond Fund:

<https://chicagobond.org/donate/>

Las Vegas, Vegas Freedom Fund:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/vegasfreedomfund>

Portland, PDX Protest Bail Fund:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/pdx-protest-bail-fund/donate>

Milwaukee, Milwaukee Freedom Fund:

https://fundrazr.com/mkefreedomfund?ref=ab_1uiOVkvGUaH1uiOVkvGUaH

Oakland, Bay Area Anti-Repression Committee Bail Fund:

<https://rally.org/ARCbailfund>

Louisville, Louisville Community Bail Fund:

<https://actionnetwork.org/fundraising/louisville-community-bail-fund/>

Phoenix, Black People's Justice Fund:

<https://secure.everyaction.com/IFZFGA1BpUa9kyYYgSxSKw2>

Miami, FempowerMia Corp:

<https://www.paypal.me/freethemall>

Bronx, The Bronx Freedom Fund:

<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/bronx-freedom-fund-inc>

Seattle, The BLM Seattle Freedom Fund:

<https://blacklivesseattle.org/donate/>