



June 2, 2020

RE: Black Lives Matter

Like many of you, we have been witnessing the recent events and uprisings in the United States and here in Toronto. We share and echo the anger and exhaustion of Black students, faculty, staff and community members who are mourning, organizing, educating, and holding space amidst these uncertain times.

It would be dishonest to pretend that this is shocking. It is devastatingly normal that, at a time where much of the world has been shut down in response to a global pandemic, anti-Black racism continues to claim the lives of Black people who are simply trying to survive:

Regis Korchinski-Paquet. Tony Dade. George Floyd. Breonna Taylor. Ahmaud Arbery.

In these last few months, the only thing that has been “normal” in our collective experience is anti-Black racism. Whether it is the large numbers of Black people who work in essential or frontline services that are impacted by COVID-19 or the casual way that police brutality continues to target Black and Indigenous peoples. There is nothing new to say because there is nothing new to how deeply embedded anti-Black racism, colonialism and capitalism are woven into society.

When we have advocated for a different reality, we have been told that there is not enough money or resources or political power to make the necessary changes. When we have asked for equity and anti-racism to be centered within our institutions and organizations, we have been told that nothing can be made mandatory. Like many of you, we are angry and tired because we know that more can be done. This is the time to demand a world that can be different because we have already seen what can be made possible and there is no reason to accept that it cannot be done.

We are ready for a “new normal” where all forms of oppression, including anti-Black racism, cease to exist.

Black Lives Matter because when we resist the systemic belief that some lives are more valuable than others, we lose nothing. When we stand up for those who have been lost to senseless violence, we re-affirm that human lives matter more than lost property.

Here is what you can do now:

- **Call to Action**
 - Contact your [local councillor](#), High Park City Councillor Gord Perks (416-392-7919; councillor_perks@toronto.ca), High Park MPP Bhutilla Karpoche (416-763-5630; BKarpoche-CO@ndp.on.ca), High Park MP Arif Virani (613-992-2936; ARIF.VIRANI@PARL.GC.CA), Mayor John Tory (416-397-2489; mayor_tory@toronto.ca) and demand justice for Regis Korchinski-Paquet and a full investigation into the Toronto Police Service.
 - If you are participating in physical actions (including rallies, teach-ins, community healing spaces), please consider quarantining for 14 days if you are



able to do so. Additionally, please see below for a link to protesting as safely as possible during a pandemic, including wearing a mask, using hand sanitizer, and practicing physical distancing if possible.

- **Educational Resources for Organizing**
 - [25 ways to be in the Struggle beyond the streets](#)
 - [31 Children's books to support conversations on race, racism, and resistance](#)
 - [Resources for non-Black Folks to Support Black communities](#)
 - [The Black Lives Canada Syllabus by Huda Hussan](#)
 - [Alicia Garza Red Talks](#)
 - [Say Her Name; Resisting Police Brutality Against Black Women](#)
 - [How to Protest Safely Against Racism During a Pandemic](#)
 - [Anti-racism resources for non-black people](#)

- **Contribute to Organizations Focused on Black Lives**
 - [A Fund for Black-led Mental Health Supports](#)
 - [Toronto Protestor Bail Fund](#)
 - [How to Support Protesters in Every City](#)
 - [300 Hours: What I learned about Black Queer and Trans liberation at BLMTO Tent City](#)
 - [Justice for Regis Go Fund Me](#)

- **Mental Health/ Crisis Resources**
 - The Gerstein Centre: 416-929-5200
 - Youthline 1800-268-9688
 - Scarborough Mobile Crisis Program: 416-495-2891
 - Trans Lifeline: (877)-330-6366 (CANADA)
 - Distress Centre Peel: 905-278-7208
 - Barrie Crisis Team: 705-728-5044
 - Crisis Services of Waterloo Region: 519-744-1813
 - COAST (Hamilton area): 905-972-8338
 - Durham Mental Health Services: 1-800-742-1890/905-666-0483
 - 4 County Crisis Community Mental Health Crisis Response Program: 705-745-6484/866-995-9933; serves Peterborough, City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton and Northumberland. Short-term crisis counseling and crisis bed available.
 - Peel Crisis Services: 905-278-9036
 - [Mental Health Chat Rooms](#)

In Solidarity,

The Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students