Dear students,

We graduated the 49th class of the UC San Diego School of Medicine this past Sunday. Nothing could be more inspiring, and indicative of why we are all here, doing what we do.

With all this happiness and joy, our hearts still weigh heavy with the pain that has been driving the protests against racial injustice around our country these past few days. We know that the death of George Floyd is emblematic of a long-standing systemic problem of racial injustice that we all face together, the same underlying problem that has led our populations of color, our poor, and our disadvantaged to disproportionately suffer the toll of the COVID-19 pandemic and other public health crises, acute and chronic.

Racial injustice – like other forms of social injustice that we must contend with - is not only a threat to public health, but is a threat to individual health. We in the School of Medicine stand together with all who oppose it. As healers, we have a particular duty to uphold the health and welfare of those around us, and can no more look away from racial injustice and racial invisibility than we can any other scourge on the health of our communities. It not only affects our patients and their families, but also affects those in our own medical school family - our own students, trainees and faculty of color.

We re-affirm our commitment to continue to eradicate the effects of racial injustice firmly in our sights, as we refine our curriculum, support our learners and teachers who are disproportionately affected by it, and continue to grow and thrive as an institution serving our community. We take this commitment as central to our mission of training compassionate physicians.

With you in hope,

Steven R. Garfin, M.D.
Interim Dean UCSD School of Medicine

Maria C. Savoia M.D.
Dean for Medical Education
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