Dear Students,

We stand with Chancellor Khosla and Vice Chancellor Petitt in unequivocally condemning the disproportionate use of excessive force by police in communities of color and denouncing vigilante acts that terrorize members of the community based upon race, ethnicity, country of origin, immigration status, religion, disability, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

We are heart broken by police shooting another unarmed Black man, Jacob Blake, in Kenosha, Wisconsin on Sunday night. We are equally sad about the loss of life that happened this week in the subsequent protests at the hands of an armed child. We wish that we did not have to send out emails like this so frequently, we are renewing our commitment to doing our part to enforce anti-racist policies and create Justice for our medical school community and our patients. We want you to know that faculty is available to all of you for support, encouragement and love. Please let us know if you need support in this time, our virtual doors are open.

Against the backdrop of a once in a generation pandemic, catastrophic fires in California, and a category 4 hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico, all of which affect our minority and vulnerable communities disproportionately, the impact of these unjust shootings is devastating. We understand that focusing on medical school right now is hard, especially given the isolation predicated by the COVID pandemic, everything looks different and our normal support systems are compromised. We want you to know that the time and work you are putting in now will allow you to become leaders in our society to help us combat the inequities we see on a daily basis. We believe in your promise, we believe in your hard work, and we know that your commitment will change the world for the better.

It is simply unacceptable that the call for racial justice remains unmet in 2020. We want you to know that UC San Diego School of Medicine is committed to standing against hate and anti-Blackness in our school and broader society. We know that you are in pain, as are we, by these events. We ask everyone to practice kindness, patience, empathy and compassion for each other during this time. We are here to support you. All of you.

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OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

August 27, 2020
ALL STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF AT UC SAN DIEGO (Including UC San Diego Health and Scripps Institution of Oceanography)

Statement on Jacob Blake and Continued Anti-Black Violence

With all that has occurred in the last few months from the onset and spread of the coronavirus to the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks, and Aja Raquell Rhone Spears, the shooting of Jacob Blake, another unarmed Black man, in the presence of his sons is almost too much to bear.

On Sunday evening, a police officer in Kenosha, Wisconsin, shot and severely injured 29-year-old Blake, who is now paralyzed, in critical condition and fighting for his life. Blake is the latest in a long line of Black people who have been shot and severely wounded or killed by police.

The excessive force exercised by police led to protests in Kenosha and across the country. On the second day of protests, a white teenager from Illinois traveled to Kenosha, confronted demonstrators, shot and killed two men, and injured a third person.

Blake’s shooting and the senseless deaths and maiming of protestors has our community processing new and renewed sadness, frustration, fatigue and fear. Our Black community members, in particular, are exhausted, traumatized, fearful, outraged, and in profound pain.

Sustained and recurring violence against our Black family, friends and neighbors compounds and intensifies the very real and very human response to tragedy. These incidents are incredibly difficult for some to process. It is crucially important that we support one another as we process these layered and complex feelings. We ask everyone to practice patience, kindness, empathy and compassion during this time.

It is important to restate that the University of California San Diego unequivocally condemns the disproportionate use of excessive force by police in communities of color. We also denounce vigilante acts that terrorize members of the community.
based upon race, ethnicity, country of origin, immigration status, religion, disability, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation. We as a community must not and will not tolerate acts of hate, bias or violence.

As our community continues to learn how to be actively anti-racist by pursuing individual, institutional, and structural change that will dismantle anti-Black racism, we recognize the need to provide spaces for healing from racial trauma and for restorative self-care. We are in the process of coordinating gatherings designed to support and rally around our Black community members who are struggling through this tragic time in our country.

Slavery, racism, and discrimination are all part of our nation’s story. The call for racial justice remains unmet in 2020. As leaders, we acknowledge this fact and are working to address it. We continue to advance dialogue while taking corrective action.

In times such as this, our open, inclusive, and compassionate community rallies together to support one another. Know that UC San Diego is committed to doing what can be done within our institution to make sure everyone feels that they belong and that they matter. This is our commitment to ourselves and to each other.

Pradeep K. Khosla  
Chancellor  
Becky R. Petitt  
Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

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