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Cultural Resource Centers Black Lives Matter Statement

Cultural Resource Centers Team

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The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter is a powerful and constant reminder that Black lives haven't mattered. The end of slavery was not the end of dehumanizing Black people; it was the beginning of a deliberate weaving of racism that has penetrated deep into the fabric of the American legal, educational, political, health care, and financial systems. Eric Garner couldn't breathe. George Floyd couldn't breathe (again) because law enforcement would not take their knee off his neck. Racism, police brutality, and systems of power have crippled the Black community. It is time for us to take our knees off the necks of the Black community. It is time for us to take a stance and bend our knees to kneel against oppression. The knee has become emblematic of the oppression and suppression of Black people - even as Kaepernick took a knee to protest, we have far to go.

We want to honor the memories of those folks brutally murdered and for whom justice has not been served: Eric Garner, Michael Brown Jr., Tamir Rice, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Riah Milton, Tete Gulley, Dominique "Rem'mie" Fells, George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks and many more. We say their names so we don't forget them. We say their names to work tirelessly to prevent it from happening again.

While communities of color often are grouped together when allocating resources and discussing systematic oppression, the experience of Black people in the United States is distinct in its direct connection with the country being built by, but not for Black people. Anti-Blackness is pervasive (some examples can be found here, here, and here), and isn't only perpetrated by white people. Non-Black people of color are not automatically anti-racist and can contribute to anti-Blackness. This is important to recognize. It is crucial for white and non-Black people of color to work to dismantle systemic oppression that prevents Black people from living without the constant weight of being in survival mode. Our collective liberation depends on it.

The Cultural Resource Centers must be a space that spends energy shifting power to people who are actively working against racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and bigotry. We are passionate about empowering our communities of scholars to build a just and equitable world. We recognize the power of higher education to address state-sanctioned violence, social injustice, and systemic oppression. We are committed to educating our communities on various social justice issues; committed to fostering dialogue around how anti-Blackness shows up; and committed to engaging in opportunities to better serve our BIPOC students/communities.

As the CRCs work to support our Black students, we acknowledge the labor that Black students who have come to us with concerns have contributed to our plans moving forward. We recognize the shortcomings of our unit and commit to actively engaging in actionable change. Our professional staff are working to create a plan that seeks to sustainably and effectively bring about change to uplift and support PSU's Black students. We look forward to sharing our plans with you later this summer. For now, here are some initial commitments we make as a unit:

The Cultural Resource Centers:

Provide opportunities for educating our student leaders and staff by holding space for members to gain knowledge, awareness, and skills to take action for racial justice. Our goal is that our student leaders will be able to interrupt anti-Blackness and have difficult conversations in our spaces.

Training opportunities include: CRC Summer Orientation and quarterly CRC Leadership Team Gatherings.

Intentionally shifting how we use our financial resources to (re)invest in the Black community.

Prioritize hiring Black trainers/facilitators for CRC Leadership Team Gatherings

Prioritize hiring Black trainers/facilitators for Summer Orientation to implement Anti-Black curriculum

Support professional development opportunities that either center Black students or address Anti-Blackness

Supporting Black Graduation with staff support and financial support

We remain committed to being educated on ways to uplift, support, and advocate for the Black community; to being aware of and speaking out against injustices faced by all of our communities, but especially the Black community; to critically reflect on how our centers and programming may further harm the Black community; and to provide opportunities for folx in the community to share feedback on their interactions and experiences with our staff and our centers.

Committing the majority of our quarterly pro-staff retreat time to doing individual and group work centered around racial justice and anti-racism.

Revising our CRC learning goals to include a goal around healing

Specifically addressing how we meet our CRC learning goals through each center's programming

Revising our current CRC processes and removing any barriers that may impact underrepresented students; implementing an equity framework

We commit to updating this document throughout the year to support transparency of our progress and plan to share this information widely with our stakeholders at the beginning of fiscal year 2022.

The Multicultural Student Center: Confronting Anti-Blackness cannot be the burden of one community. We all must work to continuously address and eradicate Anti-Black racism. In partnership with campus stakeholders, the MCC will explore the intersections of race and other identities (gender, socioeconomic status, (dis)ability, etc.) in the context of Anti-Blackness and implement intentional campaigns to center Black history, voices, and perspectives. The MCC will work with the Pan-African Commons and other centers to identify how best to support joint efforts that confront Anti-Black racism. One example of this is our continued collaborative work with our partners at the Office of International Student & Scholar Services who along with the MCC recognize that Anti-Blackness extends far beyond the United States. Together, we will work to provide resources for how PSU's international scholars can learn about the history of Anti-Blackness in Oregon to understand the context of their local community and to be able to meaningfully engage in the crucial work to break down the far-reaching Anti-Black systems and culture that has existed for ages both in the U.S. and abroad.

La Casa Latina Student Center: Anti-Blackness and colorism are practices that are real and pervasive within the Latinx community. These centuries-old prejudices that serve to uphold white supremacy and racism must be disrupted. This must happen in our centers, amongst our friends, in our own homes and many times within ourselves. La Casa Latina Student Center pledges to directly address these racist ideologies through programs beginning this summer and as ongoing programming indefinitely.

The Pacific Islander, Asian, & Asian American Student Center (PIAAA): We may not realize it or are too ashamed to acknowledge it, but our diverse community engages in anti-Black behavior that further dehumanizes the Black community. In the PIAAA community, anti-blackness can show up as: perpetuating colorism and devaluing darker skin in our perceptions of beauty and attractiveness; cultural appropriation and using African American vernacular, fashion/style, etc; the ways in which we describe the Black community in both english and in our native tongue within our households and social circles- including the use of the "N" word; the instilled preference of dominant, white culture as a societal standard; remaining silent when the Black community experiences violence and oppression; participating in performative allyship instead of taking action to make change; and so much more. We recognize that folx won't always get it right and that everyone has the capacity to do harm. This is why we are committed to (un)learning together as a community.

PIAAA commits to:

Ongoing training and educational opportunities for PIAAA staff to gain awareness, knowledge, and language around racism, anti-racist work, colonial mentality, social justice, white supremacy, and more.

Continuously work to foster a space in PIAAA where we can have authentic and meaningful conversations about white supremacy, racism, and anti-Blackness.

Initiate and foster intentional collaboration that supports and amplifies the voices of BIPOC.

Addressing anti-Blackness in the PIAAA community through programming starting in the Fall. As well as programming that shares the interconnectedness of our struggles for liberation and how various communities within the PIAAA grouping have resisted and made revolutionary change because of the Black community.

Pan-African Commons: Blackness is not monolithic; the Black identity consists of multiple layers and intersecting identities. Historically, the Black community has turned a blind eye to the struggles of the Black LGBTQ+ community. The Black Freedom Movement would not have persisted without the efforts of civil rights leaders such as Ernestine Eckstein and Bayard Rustin. The death of Tony Mcdade has exposed the world to the injustices faced by the Black Trans community. Black lives cannot matter without acknowledging that Black Trans lives matter. Pan-African Commons commits to exploring intersectionality and providing

space for students within the African diaspora to discuss social justice issues such as anti-Blackness and police brutality.

The Middle East, North African, and South Asian Initiative: Within the Middle East North Africa South Asia (MENASA) community, anti-Blackness and colorism exist and are pervasive today. The colonial wave spreading throughout the African and South Asian continents during the late 1800s was a passageway for white supremacy and racial arrogance. Indigenous African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian identities and cultures were suppressed, leaders humiliated, and a gulf in the reconstruction of novel identities was created. The MENASA Initiative is committed to directly address these racist ideologies through programs beginning this summer and as ongoing programming indefinitely.

The Native American Student and Community Center CRC Programming Team: We understand that anti-Blackness is alive at PSU and are working hard to support our students with a trauma-informed lens. We acknowledge that Black voices are not heard and are often not at the table to make important decisions that affect Black communities. We support our Black students and are very aware that our Indigenous students are on the front lines protesting peacefully supporting Black lives. Our Indigenous students are in solidarity with Black and African students. The NASCC CRC Programming Team pledges to affirm that Black Lives matter by working with students to identify anti-Black curriculum and activities. In addition, we will support the Pan-African Commons Programming Team or the student group that is planning Black graduation.

How to Help:

Now is the time to act. Don't be immobilized by your fear. If you're looking for ways to play your part, you can find several options to get you started here: [BLM RESOURCES](#). We highly encourage self-education as there are many BIPOC who have dedicated their lives to produce content for you to engage in (un)learning.

In solidarity,

Cultural Resource Centers Team