



STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF HOSTOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE STATEMENT REGARDING RACIAL INJUSTICE AMIDST THE COVID-19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC ACROSS THE NATION AND NEW YORK CITY

Trayvon Martin wasn't safe in his community. Atatiana Jefferson was not able to spend time with her nephew. Breonna Taylor could not sleep peacefully in her bed. Six years ago, Eric Garner gasped for breath. Recently, George Floyd took his last breath, with a knee on his neck. These people have two things in common, they were all murdered by the police, and they were black.

The black community has been consistently held behind the margins by the hands of a racist system. The criminal justice system and the public health system have both been racist towards people of color. These systems have led to the death of people of color in America. We must confront the ongoing patterns of discrimination and racially motivated violence within this country. Black people account for 25% of all deaths reported amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, double the percentages of other racial groups (The COVID 19 Tracking Project <https://covidtracking.com/race/dashboard>). Black people are also three times more likely to be killed by police than their white counterparts. There is a severe lack of accountability for police officers as 99% of police killings between the years 2013-2019 had no charges filed (Mapping Police Violence-- <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/>).

The Student Government Association of Hostos Community College (SGA) fundamentally objects to the blatant disregard for black lives through the use of the excessive militia and authoritative forces. Police brutality plagues this country and results in the murder and abuse of black Americans every day. Students of Hostos Community College denounce this behavior and will take action through activism, advocacy, and fiscal initiative in combating these evils. The justice system in this country has not only failed her citizens but utterly disregard black lives. Now is not the time for complacency or silence. Now is a time for a call to action! We must speak up as Hostos students. We must stand with members of the black community and fight for justice. Hostos Community College students are deeply heart-broken during this time. The school prides itself on how diverse it is, and we take pride in identifying and celebrating our different racial, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. It is heartbreaking to see the killings of members of the black community by those meant to protect us. Furthermore, the

police have been empowered by political leaders that have refused to reform police forces with their excessive use of force.

TO CUNY; Kalief Browder was a CUNY student. He was one of us!! He committed suicide after spending three years at the New York City prison complex. In solidarity with the fallen lives due to police brutality, we are calling on **CUNY to terminate their contract with the NYPD.** It is time to defund the police and fund the students. During these times, when people have tried to protest peacefully, the NYPD, along with many other police departments, have met these peaceful protests with force. The NYPD has not shown leadership, and they do not deserve to be associated with **CUNY. CUT TIES WITH THE NYPD AND FUND CUNY NOW!!!**

TO HOSTOS ADMINISTRATION; We are urging the administration to continue to educate the faculty and staff on racism and how to advocate against racism. Also, to inform the students, faculty, and staff on police brutality and advocacy and the need to reform the justice system. We, as a college, need to do better in support, educating, and creating awareness on the unjust killings of black people by the police.

Also, since CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice is one of the most highly respected criminal justice institutions in America, we echo John Jay's student government's request that the entire faculty and administration of John Jay College take the necessary measures to incorporate racially conscious lenses in their Criminal Justice and Correctional Studies curriculum and pedagogy. We're asking the Hostos administration to do the same. We're asking the administration to make sure the entire college is racially conscious and educated on racism in America and to have significant black representation at the administration level.

TO STUDENTS OF HOSTOS; We are the Student Government Association (SGA) and we represent **YOU!** Mr. Kelvin Pineda is the president of the current administration and Mr. Muiz Agbaje is the incoming president of the SGA. Both the current and incoming administration of the SGA stand in solidarity and oppose the injustices imposed on people of color every day. It is a very intricate game of chess that we play, and we are breaking down the layers of systemic oppression that have plagued the system before us. We are strategizing and learning to play the game by educating our people not only of our rich histories but of the power of unity. The day we all stand together is the day that the system can no longer

control us. We must empower one another, and we must create and empower the leaders of tomorrow, bestow upon them the knowledge denied to us in the past.

Emotions are high right now, and we urge you to channel the emotional energy into being the change that you want to see. We have to be able to lead with a level head and strategize with leaders around you and empower those around your community. We will re-define what the revolution will represent. Also, it is essential to remember that we will ascertain positions of power and influence far more significantly than what these simple law enforcement agents that violate our rights have. We will infiltrate the system and change it from the inside out because we have already started. Skin color should not be a factor in one's advancement, but the intellect and love that one holds in their heart and their vision for unity.

Lastly, the SGA encourages you to be a part of the **BLACK LIVES MATTER** movement in whatever capacity you can. You can either educate yourself on it, sign petitions, spread awareness, or be a part of an organized peaceful protest. If you must protest, please follow the already provided guidelines on COVID-19, make sure you are part of only a peaceful protest. Once things start to escalate, we ask you to prioritize your safety first. Another way you can contribute is by donating to organizations to bail out arrested protesters. Also, staying silent or doing nothing is just as dangerous. Not "picking a side" is also picking a side. Do not give the NYPD an excuse to arrest and violate you.

Continue to stay safe and well during these trying times. We pray that you are staying healthy and continuing to push through these trying times. We will get through this together and don't forget, **BLACK LIVES MATTER!!!**

Respectfully
submitted,

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