

Dear CWRU Law Community:

There are no words sufficient to denounce the police brutality that killed Tony McDade, David McAtee, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Desmond Franklin, Rayshard Brooks, and the countless other acts of police violence that continue to traumatize Black communities. We, the CWRU community, are implicated in a white supremacist system of “public safety” that was not made to keep Black people safe, and continues to take Black lives.

As protesters take to the streets to demand change, they are met across the country by militarized police forces protecting property over Black lives. As the National Lawyers Guild Director has stated, “[r]acialized, violent policing of Black, Brown, and Indigenous bodies has always existed in this country. Now is the time for accountability. Property can always be replaced. Black lives can not.” We stand firmly with protesters across the country, and denounce police violence and intimidation toward protesters as these tactics further demonstrate the oppressive and racist nature of the institution of policing in the United States.

As lawyers, we have a responsibility to fight injustice and to empower the voices of people directly impacted by racist systems intended to protect white people and their property. We believe in investing in communities and divesting from racist systems that perpetuate violence and trauma. We recognize that love for one another is an unyielding commitment to structural justice, and therefore that:

- Where the status quo is violent, inaction is violent. There is no structural change without consistent concessions in resources, time, and learned history from those with power.
- Silence is violence. Even more violent than silence, are words that serve to ease consciousnesses rather than generate action. We must not mistake a changed news cycle for structural justice.
- CWRU has no commitment to human rights without a commitment to challenging the structural violence in our immediate community in neighborhoods including East Cleveland.
- Maintained ignorance is violence. This means a continued commitment to re-education, and accountability for the same institutional commitment from CWRU.
- The right to life of our peers is not a trend, and treating it as such is an act of violence.
- The work is forthcoming, and in it we must center the voices and needs of Black people, while recognizing that the work is not Black people’s work to do.
- There is no more convenient time. We will always be busy. The commitment to structural justice must exist regardless.
- The sense of urgency cannot be the Black community’s to bear. This sense of urgency must be everyone’s.
- We are extremely powerful. We must know and organize our power.
- This statement, this conversation, and these resources are not sufficient and are not complete, and that itself is the work.

Our humanity is interconnected, our freedom is interconnected, and we will continue to fight for collective liberation.

In solidarity,

CWRU Black Law Students Association executive board

CWRU National Lawyers Guild executive board

For free mental health resources:

<https://case.edu/studentlife/healthcounseling/counseling-services>

You can speak with a counselor 24/7 by calling Counseling Services at 216.368.5872.

For beginning work on anti-racism, please see the attached resource list.

To support protestors who were arrested in the recent protests, please consider donating to one of the following Bail Funds:

Canton / Akron: [Canton/Akron Bail Fund](#)

Cleveland: [BLM Cleveland](#)

Columbus: [Columbus Freedom Fund](#)

Cincinnati: [Beloved Community Church Bail Fund](#) — *Choose an amount and click Cincinnati Bail Fund on next screen*

Youngstown: [Youngstown Freedom Fund](#)