

To the Notre Dame community,

Now and forever, the LGBT Law Forum stands in support of and in solidarity with Black students at Notre Dame, Black Lives Matter, and Black individuals everywhere. The horrific murders of Black people and systemic devaluing of Black life, while dominating the news cycle this summer, are not new developments. Black communities have lived with this violence, both at its most overt and in insidious, foundational forms, for centuries. The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, David McAtee, Botham Jean, Atatiana Jefferson, Layleen Polanco, and countless others were not incidental. This is an issue which deserves not simply our acknowledgement and comprehension, but our action.

We make this statement because the struggles of the LGBTQ community cannot be distanced from the ongoing hardship and brutal oppression faced by Black communities. Many of the revolutionary moments in our community's history were catalyzed and carried by Black transgender women, Black lesbians, Black individuals who endure marginalization of multiple and interlocking kinds. To pretend that we face wholly separate issues is to become complicit in the violence. We cannot ignore our obligations and all that we owe to our Black siblings. Justice and liberation are historically not things that are given freely, but instead are fought for. The LGBTQ community has a moral imperative to show up for this fight.

In all of our individual capacities as allies to Black people, it is our primary responsibility to listen, internalize, and learn. Systems of privilege are not dismantled through the leadership of the privileged, but by deferring to the experiences and judgment of those experiencing the harm. It is furthermore the responsibility of institutional actors to step up and offer material assistance in response to the expressed needs of its marginalized groups. We affirm here our support for the demands of BIPOC student organizations for Notre Dame to hold itself accountable in the movement for racial justice.

Attending an elite University like Notre Dame is a privilege and an opportunity not many are afforded. We are all in a position to demonstrate solidarity in ways that go beyond words. Educate yourself, donate your money or your time to organizations doing the hard work on the ground, and show up for your fellow students. In the Law School we like to talk about becoming a "different kind of lawyer." This is an opportunity to prove that those aren't just words. This is an opportunity to prove that that our students, *and* the University itself, really do embody the spirit of service, justice, and compassion we claim.

In respect and solidarity,

The Notre Dame LGBT Law Forum