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## Message from School of Medicine leadership

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We, the leadership of Tulane University School of Medicine, condemn the actions and the individuals responsible for the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and so many other African American citizens whose lives have been brutally taken. There can be no misunderstanding of that. But we also can not be silent about the societal ills that have lead to disproportionate illness and death from COVID-19 in our African American communities. All of these are but the latest examples of more long-standing and deep issues.

Feelings of anger, sadness, hopelessness, helplessness, confusion fill many these days. How does one make sense of injustice? What does one say or do?

Many organizations including the AAMC have had calls to action which we support. (<https://www.aamc.org/news-insights/press-releases/aamc-statement-police-brutality-and-racism-america-and-their-impact-health> ) But action before understanding can be directionless. What can we achieve with a few words, a few statements? I favor sustained efforts and repeated messaging based on a purposeful, intentional shared vision. I hope you will contribute to the vision and plans.

We want to acknowledge the difficulty that our faculty, staff, and especially our students and residents are facing in navigating the current COVID pandemic while also experiencing the senseless violence against the African American community. While many of us will never know what it is like to “walk a mile

in your shoes”, we want you to know that we care. We want to encourage all to speak up against discrimination, injustice, and inequality. We want you to know that we understand that this not just a law enforcement problem, but a societal problem which must be examined and dealt with in an all-inclusive and compassionate manner.

We want you to know that we will continue our work in promoting cultural competency and raising awareness of implicit biases. We will continue to provide resources for Black students and all students through the Director of SOM Student Support and Wellness and the Director of the SOM Office of Multicultural Affairs.

We encourage you to share your ideas and stories with us and to offer your input on ways in which we can better serve your needs and our community’s needs as a diverse and inclusive community. We will follow up this message with additional items and initiatives targeting opportunities for dialogue, engagement, and change.

**Lee**

L. Lee Hamm, M.D.  
Senior Vice President & Dean of the School of Medicine  
The James R. Doty Distinguished Professor and Chair  
Tulane University