We are going through some sad and very difficult times. Last week started with the horrific death of George Floyd and ended with well-intended protests that turned into non-sense acts of violence. We want you to know we do not and will not tolerate racism or violence at the University of Utah School of Medicine.

We are committed to not being passive bystanders and we recognize inequities have always existed for African Americans. There is community trauma in the wake of recent events and we ask you all to join us and practice compassion and empathy for our colleagues, students, and community members that are experiencing it. There is a range of overwhelming emotions, including anger, sadness, frustration, disbelief and hopelessness.

Racism is a reality and it can be seen on many different levels, including the most recent events in the news as well as with the COVID-19 crisis, with strikingly disproportional rates of infection and complications seen in the Black and LatinX communities, shining the spotlight on the different world created by social determinants of health for underrepresented communities. As medical educators we are committed to eliminating this insidious but prevalent form of discrimination.

This was not an isolated event. Unfortunately, such episodes have become way too commonplace. We cannot be numb to racism. Please act against it. We value diversity. We are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment by empowering those from underrepresented minority backgrounds to seek meaningful change. We commit ourselves to providing the educational tools needed in order to accomplish that change.

Racism is a threat not only to individuals, but to the health of the public. We are responsible for what is happening. We are accountable to see that it ends.

To those experiencing trauma, we urge you to practice self-care by connecting with family, friends, and other community support people. Please continue to take care of yourselves and each other during this time. Do not hesitate to reach out to resources available within the School of Medicine to help you deal with these issues.

To our community in the School of Medicine, becoming physicians is the greatest community service and activism you can do and we stand together in the call for justice.

Stay well.

Paloma Cariello, MD, MPH
Associate Dean for Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
Benjamin Chan, MD
Associate Dean for Admissions

Sara Lamb, MD
Associate Dean for Curriculum

Brad Poss, MD
Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education

Adam Stevenson, MD
Associate Dean for Student Affairs

Richard Wiggins, MD
Associate Dean for Continuing Medical Education

Wayne Samuelson, MD
Vice Dean for Education

Paloma Felga Cariello, MD, MPH
Associate Dean – Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Fellowship Program Director
She/Her/Hers

Division of Infectious Diseases
Department of Internal Medicine
30 N 1900 E, SOM 4B319
Salt Lake City, UT 84132
Fax (801) 585-3377

School of Medicine Dean’s Office
30 N 1900 E Rm, SOM 1C351
Salt Lake City, UT 84132
Phone (801) 587-4806