



2020

ACIFA's STATEMENT: BLACK LIVES MATTER

The Alberta Colleges and Institutes Faculties Association (ACIFA) and its member organizations are horrified by the events that resulted in the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020.

ACIFA condemns the actions that lead to this senseless and brutal act that resulted in the death of yet another unarmed black man at the hands of a white police officer in the United States, and understands that the murder of Mr. Floyd is but the most recent example of a long line of deaths of black individuals at the hands of police.

The deaths of Mr. Floyd, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Philando Castile, Breonna Taylor, Botham Jean, Rayshard Brooks, and countless others have led to the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM), a movement for social justice and equity.

Despite the escalating violence by police across the United States in response to largely peaceful protests, the ongoing protests organized by the BLM movement against police brutality have struck a nerve across the globe, spawning large rallies in solidarity with BLM movements in countless cities in Canada and across Europe.

It is important to recognize that while the circumstances that lead to the murder of Mr. Floyd were American, we are not immune to this phenomenon in Canada. Canada is only recently coming to terms with its colonial legacy, and has its own under-recognized history of black slavery.

Black and Indigenous people of colour (BIPOC) continue to be over-represented in prison populations, homeless populations, and are unfortunately still subject to the racist practice of "carding" by the police - an unfortunate reality in Alberta that has not been addressed by politicians of any political stripe.

We know we have work to do. As stewards of higher education at colleges and polytechnic institutions across our province, ACIFA recognizes that systemic racism has no place on our campuses.

To our friends and colleagues who have, and continue to endure, incidents of overt and covert discrimination while on the job, please know that your faculty associations will support you every single time.

To our students, as Educators, we will continue to do the hard and necessary work that needs to be done to educate and challenge ourselves to deconstruct racism in all of its forms, wherever and whenever we see it.

To the greater communities in which we operate, ACIFA and its member associations offer their support to the Black Lives Matter movement and add our voices to the growing international chorus that is demanding - and working towards the construction of - a new world, one more just and equitable for the individuals and communities who have endured brutal acts of racist violence for far too long.

Respectfully Submitted (and in Solidarity),

ACIFA Executive Council and Presidents' Council