



We will do better

For generations, we've heard the cries for justice and waited for a brighter day, thinking it was someone else's job to fix systemic racism and rampant discrimination. Or worse, we thought it was mostly fixed, that there was nothing to see here.

The images we're seeing in the media and online make it clear: We're not doing enough as a society to combat the scourge of racism.

We know better. We must do better. We will do better.

The video of George Floyd, an unarmed black man who died before our eyes, calls each one of us to pause, reflect and act.

That heartache is why people of all races are surging through the streets of American cities and suburban towns, risking their own lives to raise their voices in the middle of a historic pandemic. Their anguish cannot be ignored.

Rowan University's Division of Academic Affairs and the Division of Student Affairs are committed to working with the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to create a campus that is welcoming and safe for all of our students. Those aren't empty words. This will drive every decision we make.

By nature, educators are hopeful, forward-looking people. Every time we set out to share knowledge and offer feedback to our students, we have an opportunity to shape the future, to leave an imprint on the next crop of innovators, leaders and teachers. It's our duty to get it right.

We certainly fall short sometimes. Recognizing and addressing those problems makes us stronger as an institution, so we'll continue to identify areas that need our attention.

As Rowan's chief academic officer, I want to say to our black students, faculty and staff — I hear you — and to our entire Rowan family, I am personally committed to ensuring our community is doing all it can to address the inherent inequities that contribute to an unjust society.

This is how:

- We will listen, even when it makes us uncomfortable.
- We will not tolerate racism, hate or discrimination on our campuses.
- We will work harder to build a university body as diverse as the world around us.
- We will recognize our role as educators and leaders, responsible for equipping our students and the community at large with the tools necessary for critical thinking.
- We will use our collective voice to reach outside the classroom, amplifying the concerns of the marginalized among us, and offering safe and respectful space for the thoughtful conversations we all need to have.

Starting Thursday, Rowan University will host a new virtual series called, "[We Are Not OK: Injustice, Action, and Healing](#)." Designed to educate, support and point the way forward, these conversations will be an opportunity for the Rowan community and its partners to voice concerns and develop action plans.

We accept the challenge to make the world a better place. This is our responsibility to each of you. I welcome your comments and concerns: officeoftheprovo@rowan.edu

Sincerely,

Tony Lowman, Ph.D.

Provost