



ILLINOIS

College of Law

Dear College of Law Community –

I want to thank all who attended and participated in Monday’s Town Hall conversation about the murder of George Floyd and its aftermath. I hope (and believe) that the event provided a space for all of us to connect with fellow College of Law staff, faculty, students and alums and to reflect together during this time of pandemic isolation. I am grateful to my fellow participants and learned much from my faculty colleagues, as well as from students and alums, who spoke. The murder of Mr. Floyd by police officers – coming on the heels of brutal killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and far too many others – is horrific. These events have affected so many of us so profoundly. Alongside the wide range of emotions we feel as a community, it is my hope that, above all, these events propel us as individuals and as a society to more steadfastly address situations that have persisted for far too long and that simply cannot be tolerated any longer.

As I said in my message of June 1, the College of Law “stand[s] in solidarity in the fight against racism and oppression in our country. Our faculty, students, staff and alumni embrace our responsibility to make the world around us better.” Among the important lessons reiterated during the Town Hall is that this responsibility means more than refraining from racist words and deeds ourselves; we must intervene to address discrimination practiced by other individuals or institutions when we see or hear it. Legal institutions have particular obligations in this respect. As a law school, these include, among other things, looking for even better ways than we currently employ to gather information about and improve our own climate of mutual respect, tolerance and support; continuing to actively press for creating a more diverse student body and faculty; and writing and teaching (and advocating) about legal and policy ideas and proposals that can effectively combat systematic racism, police abuse and economic subjugation everywhere they exist. This is the very hard but undeniably critical work that lies ahead of us; I hope all of you will commit to joining me in it.

With all best wishes for your happiness and good health,

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Vikram David Amar
Dean and Iwan Foundation Professor of Law
University of Illinois College of Law