

# USC Gould

## School of Law

Dear Law School Community;

I am reaching out today, with a heavy heart, to express sadness and anger at the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. It is all the worse that these three individuals' names extend an already long list of names of people of color who have faced insult, violence, and sometimes death, merely because of the color of their skin. As I write this, I am conscious of the fact that my own frustration cannot compare to that of people, including many members of our law school community, who have far more direct and personal experience with these injustices.

As President Carol Folt wrote in [yesterday's message](#), we are united as a university dedicated to the fundamental principles of equality and inclusion, education, and discovery for the good of humanity.

As a law school, Gould seeks to embrace equality for all members of society and to be a force toward justice. We explicitly and emphatically reject and condemn violence of all forms, and certainly violence that targets members of historically disenfranchised groups.

Law, lawyers, and legal education is and must continue to be a part of the struggle toward increased fairness and justice. The legal system is inseparable from the social realities around us and this imposes, as it should, a responsibility of all of us who have chosen to join the legal profession. Lawyers must stand and give voice to our nation's most important values.

It is all too easy to despair during times as challenging as these, but we must not cede the field to most destructive elements of our nation. On the contrary, we must redouble our efforts to uphold and sustain our most fundamental commitments. This includes defending the laws of the nation, standing for the moral principles to which we remain committed, affirming the dignity and equality of all persons, and rejecting racism and bigotry in all its forms. The tragic events of recent days remind us all that we still have a long way to travel if we are to become the society we aspire to be. They also offer painful evidence of why it is imperative that we work to accelerate that journey.

In closing, we are fortunate to have among us noted legal scholars whose areas of expertise span law, race, policing and criminal justice. We plan to share relevant resources and hold a virtual conversation to address these topics, and hope you will be able to join us. We will share details as soon as they are available.

**Andrew T. Guzman** | USC Gould School of Law  
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