



VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

Charles Widger School of Law

Dear Students,

For me, every day, I am many things to many people. I am a husband, a son, a brother, a father, a professor, a law school dean. And I am a Black Man. Today, many of you joined me for an open, honest and cathartic conversation about what is happening in our world. We started with the unquestionable premise that we take racism seriously and stand against it in all forms, whether institutional or individual.

But that is not enough. That is just a starting point. And sometimes it needs to be said, and so it was.

Today was just one conversation. It's not the first we have had here at Villanova Law, and it will not be the last. I anticipate that we will meet again, in the near future. I am meeting privately with others. I am having similar conversations with all faculty and staff on Thursday of next week. I am talking with dean colleagues across the campus, and with law school deans across the country.

In our conversation today, we were open and honest. I listened. I had some answers. I also said "*I don't know*". . . a few times. Some of you may have left this conversation happy. Some sad. Some relieved. Some anguished.

Today we talked. We will talk again, as a group, and in smaller, more private settings. I will talk again. I will write. I will share with others. Talk is not enough, so there also will be action. We can and will integrate *this conversation* deeply into the educational context here at Villanova Law. I am asking everyone to pitch in, and faculty especially must lead this effort. I know they want better for you and your future.

Racism is taught, passed from generation to generation. We have a duty and ability, as your teachers, to aid the arc of the moral universe bend towards justice. You, as students, have an obligation to make things better. It's not on you just as individuals, but as a collective. And it is up to us, your professors, to help you on your way, in our little corner of the world, to be the change agents. I don't know what that looks like for you. But I know that I run a law school, and I will do what I can to make it a better place for us to address these systemic issues.

We already have a deep commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We have a commitment to be a school with a soul, placing values at the core of our legal education. That comes in the context of various specific actions, and we will continue to highlight them for you, and to take action to act on our principles.

This is an ongoing effort. I will be open and honest with you, and I will listen. I encourage each of you to continue to be open and honest with me and with each other. And to listen and work to understand with an unwavering commitment to love and respect.

This message just scratches the surface, but it is a call to all of us to be agents of change. For good.

Veritas, Caritas, Unitas,

MCA