

June 1, 2020

Office of the President

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York stands together against anti-Black racism

The deeply troubling acts of anti-Black racism that we have seen in the past weeks serve as an important reminder that the work to protect and uphold the rights and dignity of all people is imperative, and we all have a responsibility to build more equitable and inclusive communities.

York University recognizes the deep pain and frustration that members of the Black community feel as we continue to witness and experience the consequences of systemic racism that have permeated society for too long.

We also know it is not enough to simply condemn anti-Black racism. We have a shared responsibility to uphold and promote the values of respect, equity, diversity and inclusion across our campuses and in the wider world. Through scholarship and innovative programs, like our unique Black Canadian Studies Certificate, we are putting this responsibility at the center of our teaching and research. We are deepening the way we work with local communities through initiatives like our York TD Community Engagement Centre (CEC). Located in the Black Creek neighbourhood, the CEC works collaboratively with residents to improve access to education and facilitate research on issues defined by the community.

[York's Centre for Human Rights, Equity, and Inclusion](#) has remote services available, and offers a variety of helpful tools for education and training, including:

- [Understanding Racism: A Guide for Students Faculty and Staff](#)
- [Education and training sessions](#)
- Sign up for the Rights Equity Diversity Inclusion (REDI) summer workshop series: <https://rights.info.yorku.ca/redipd/>

These are important first steps, but much more needs to be done. We know that solutions begin with listening to and learning from those who face anti-Black racism, and by standing next to those fighting for a more just world.

If you have been personally affected by the events of the past few weeks, we encourage you to access the resources and supports that are available to every York community member:

- **Students:** Dedicated staff continue to provide remote support to help students manage their well-being. If you are aware of a student experiencing anxiety or stress, please have them reach out to Student Counselling & Development at 416-736-5297 or visit <https://counselling.students.yorku.ca/> to learn about remote access of services. Other mental health & wellness resources are available here: <https://mhw.info.yorku.ca/resources/resources-at-york/students/>.



- **Faculty:** York's Employee Assistance Program can be accessed for immediate confidential help at 1-800-268-5211; TTY service is available at 1-800-363-6270.
- **Staff:** York's Employee Assistance Program can be accessed for immediate confidential help at 1-800-268-5211; TTY service is available at 1-800-363-6270.

We join the many in Toronto and around the world in their grief, and we stand with Black community members in the ongoing fight to end racism and hate.

Sincerely,

Rhonda L. Lenton,
President & Vice Chancellor

Sheila Cote-Meek
Vice-President, Equity, People & Culture