

June 5, 2020

Subject: From the President: Scripps Stands Against Racism

To: Members of the Scripps Community

Over the past several days, I have heard from members of the Scripps community who are grieving the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and the countless Black people who have been victimized by police violence. Many of us are anguished by the reality that these incidents are an all-too familiar manifestation of systemic racism, inequality, and injustice witnessed and experienced throughout history and in the present.

I am sorry that the College's communications this week have left many disappointed, disillusioned, or conveyed a belief that Scripps is not committed to dismantling institutional racism.

Let me be clear now: Scripps College stands with you in calling for an end to the police brutality that traumatizes Black communities. Black Lives Matter. Our community stands against racism, oppression, and violence. We embrace our individual and institutional responsibility to engage in the work of anti-racism and to create more equitable, inclusive, and just systems on campus and in society more broadly.

But words themselves are not enough.

Scripps College is committed to expanding access to educational opportunities, nurturing the next generation of inclusive and empathetic leaders, and critiquing the systems that perpetuate social inequity. So much remains uncertain about the 2020-21 academic year, and yet we know the fight against institutional racism must continue. Thus, in whatever form the next semesters take, we will redouble our efforts to create a more equitable experience at Scripps College. Those efforts will include taking advantage of Scripps' unique mission and strengths in the following ways:

Our students and alums often talk about how the Scripps curriculum and experience illuminated societal injustice and helped them become better advocates for those who are systematically mistreated, especially with respect to the experience of Black people and other people of color. We will build upon this kind of coursework and co-curricular programming. Many of our students of color struggle financially while at Scripps, and we anticipate that the pandemic will further contribute to this challenge. We will continue to increase financial aid, reduce the need for student loans, increase student emergency funding, and ensure that students know how to access these resources.

From Scripps' history to the present, Black people and people from other marginalized groups have not always felt well supported by the College. Many have worked to create a more inclusive community, where all students, faculty, and staff feel a true sense of belonging. Yet, there is more work to be done. We will provide more opportunities for community members to

engage in anti-racism education, inclusive pedagogy workshops, and other programming that embodies and promotes the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We will develop more specific plans as we engage with our community, higher education colleagues, and Scripps partner organizations who are also working to end social inequality and injustice. Members of my leadership team and I will listen and learn. We must all harness the potential of our institution to contribute to a world of freedom and equality for all.

In support,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lara Tiedens".

Lara Tiedens
President