



CALIFORNIA WESTERN SCHOOL OF LAW
BLACK LAW STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Call to Action to Fight Racism and Police Brutality

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BLSA's outgoing and incoming executive board members would like to see the following changes implemented immediately:

1. CWSL issue a renewed and stronger statement condemning racism and police brutality.
2. BLSA and CWSL Deans meet on a regular basis going forward to discuss student concerns.
3. CWSL focus on and achieve a more diverse population of CWSL faculty and leadership.
4. Establish a zero-tolerance policy against racist comments and behaviors.
5. Increase funding for the diversity scholarship program. And, increase the number of recipients to help black students overcome financial challenges and encourage more diversity in the student population.
6. Require CWSL faculty to attend regular racial sensitivity training or meet with BLSA to discuss concerns.
7. Opportunity for BLSA to meet with CWSL Board of Directors to discuss concerns.
8. Establish outreach/recruitment for faculty and staff specifically targeting black and brown communities and job boards.
9. Establish outreach/recruitment for a more diverse student population, specifically targeting colleges and high school students.
10. Fund a town hall meeting (or series of meetings) for students to discuss the most recent unrest and concerns of the black community. Meeting should be facilitated by a local professional or black judge. Faculty and staff, beyond the Student and Diversity Services staff, should be required to attend.

The 2020-2021 BLSA Board would like to express our heartbreak, anger, and frustration as we continue to witness our brothers' and sisters' senseless murders across this country. Our hearts are heavy as we remember George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Sean Reed, and countless other black men, women, and children.

As black students, we are in a unique position today. The COVID-19 pandemic is hitting people of color the hardest. Black citizens are twice as likely to die from COVID-19; and yet, we continue to struggle to gain access to quality healthcare and immediate triage attention when we seek out care. As our wounds lay bare, there has been a flood of video clips on social media showing our community is being targeted unfairly by racism and hate. Social media has only highlighted the reality we face each day as black and brown students—a disproportionate amount of contempt. The killings of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor are only the ones that have received national attention. However, there are similar gut-wrenching stories that social media will never bring to light. This trauma is constant, and it is more than any community should have to bear.

Many of us came to California Western School of Law to become lawyers and become the change we wish to see in our society. Whether you feel this is your goal, fighting against the institutionalized racism that destroys the fabric of our democracy is a responsibility that belongs to all of us. We can all reflect on the words of Dr. Martin Luther King: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." This fight should not be limited to black and brown students or faculty. It is up to all of us to amplify our community's call against injustices of unchecked bias, brutality, and hate in police culture, our communities, and this country.

The protests we have witnessed are the start of an uprising against injustices that have gone ignored for far too long. For centuries, black people have lived through the pain, suffering, trauma, racism, and hate inflicted upon our lives. It has been far too long that we have had to sit and deal with the micro-aggressions from our peers and faculty. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

It is simply not enough to say, "I see you." It is not enough to say, "I stand with you." It is not enough to only care when one of our own becomes a hashtag.

Considering the recent horrific events, we should be uplifting and supporting our students of color now more than ever. As a school, we should be unequivocally denouncing police brutality, white supremacy, and racism in every form plaguing our country.

Now is not the time to be neutral. Now is not the time to care about property. Now is not the time to be silent. Silence is not support; instead, it is complacency and comfort.

We urge you to speak out against doctrines of hate in every way you can. Use your talents to take a stand. Please stand with us against the hatred that continuously dehumanizes the black community. We encourage everyone to lean in and educate themselves to do the necessary work to dismantle the institutional oppression that plagues us. CWSL Prides itself on its commitment to diversity; therefore, the administration should stand with black students to honor that commitment.

As a BLSA Board, we pledge to continue to create a safe space for our black students and to facilitate more conversations about race. In partnership with the school's leadership, we want to make our school a model for fighting for people's rights. We want to ensure the law provides justice for all.

We remain hopeful our school will HEAR us and implement our action steps to become a better ally. We want to be seen.

In solidarity,
Black Law Students Association
Executive Board
California Western School of Law