

Trigger warning: mentions acts of violence and racism

Rosetta Commons Black Lives Matter Statement, June 3, 2020

We, the undersigned, as members of the Rosetta Commons, recognize the grief and frustration of many members of our community and reaffirm our commitment to the safety and dignity of Black lives. The past few months have been traumatic. The recent murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Sean Reed, Nina Pop, and Ahmaud Arbery, among others, have highlighted, once again, the pervasiveness of anti-Black racism and police brutality in the United States of America. We condemn these hateful acts in no uncertain terms and stand with the Black community. Black lives matter.

In addition, the global COVID-19 pandemic continues to devastate our society and we acknowledge that Black and Indigenous communities have taken the brunt of the public health impact, putting their lives at risk while working in front-line roles, without protection or recognition. We affirm that these are all manifestations of structural racism.

To our Black colleagues and friends, know that we see you and acknowledge the exhaustion, pain, and extra trauma you carry, especially during this time.

Together, all members of our community should spend this time working to reaffirm our support for one another. We must go further, however, and recognize the part each and every one of us plays in maintaining the systems and structures that allow racism to continue. Only through this understanding can we begin the hard, necessary work of dismantling the racist structures that permeate our institutions and societies.

We can wait no longer to take action, however small, however local. If you are wondering what you can do, we have included some ideas of action steps that we have compiled at the end of this message. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but we hope it can be a beginning of a larger discussion. We encourage everyone, ourselves included, to continue to work every day towards improving our awareness, understanding, and action.

To support our community, the Rosetta Commons DE&I Committee has compiled a list of [personal well being and mental health resources](#) [link removed] as well as personal well being and [mental health support at institutions that host Rosetta labs](#) [link removed] which may be of help during this time.

Action steps:

- Educate yourself:
 - Recognize and learn about the role of slavery and oppression of both Black and Indigenous Americans in the founding of the country, and many of its academic institutions.
 - Seek out voices different from those you typically listen to and break your own silence by signing petitions or speaking out against racism. Diversify who you follow on social media platforms.
 - *Note: There are many Black educators who have generously contributed their time and resources to anti-racism work that can be easily found via a web search, so we encourage you to NOT overburden or re-traumatize your Black friends and colleagues. Please also do not overburden Black educators if they are not asking for your questions. Instead: listen, learn, amplify.*
 - Have conversations and discuss the things you learned with your non-Black family and friends.
 - See the compiled guides below for recommended readings and other educational resources:
 - [Anti-racism resources](#) compiled by Sarah Sophie Flicker and Alyssa Klein
 - Includes article, book, podcast, and movie recommendations
 - Includes organizations to follow and support
 - Includes links to more compiled resources and courses
 - [Great Big Story -- how to become a better Black Lives Matter ally](#)
 - Includes book and podcast recommendations
 - Includes organizations to follow and support
- Support justice by donating to one of the following organizations:
 - [Campaign Zero](#) works to end police violence in America through policy changes.
 - [National Bail Fund Network](#) allows you to donate funds to local organizations to help pay the bail for those who cannot afford it.
 - [Black Lives Matter](#) is a global organization working to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes.
 - [Black Mama's Bail Out](#) is a national organization to bail out arrested Black mothers.
 - [George Floyd Memorial Fund](#) to support the Estate of George Floyd including funeral expenses, mental health funds, and to benefit and care for his family and children
 - [I Run With Maud Fund](#) to assist Ahmaud's mother, Ms. Wanda Cooper-Jones, and her immediate family with financial support and in their struggle for justice
 - [Justice for Breonna Taylor funding and petition](#) to hold the police who murdered Breonna accountable for their inexcusable violence
 - [Black Visions Collective](#) works on healing and transformative justice for the Black community in Minneapolis

- Contact your elected officials:
 - If you reside within the United States of America, call your local, state, and federal government representatives and ask about their police violence policies and legislation.
 - [Find your state's governor](#)
 - [Find your city's mayor](#)
 - [Find your district's representatives](#)
 - [Find your state's senators](#)
 - If you reside outside the United States, consider calling or writing to your ambassadors to the US, foreign or state secretaries, encouraging them to put pressure on the US federal government to acknowledge failures in human rights protections

- Be safe when you demonstrate or take direct action:
 - The [NW Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild](#) has a hotline number for legal aid (206-658-7963). They are seeking additional pro-bono legal support, if anyone knows lawyers interested in volunteering email jenn.kaplan@yahoo.com.
 - [Know your rights before heading out](#) and make sure that a friend knows where you are.

- Work for diversity, equity and inclusion within our Rosetta community:
 - Create safe space in the community for Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC), Non-Black POC (NBPOC), and others to discuss. *Be mindful of turning to them for advice and/or extra work without their open offering of time and energy.*
 - Provide resources to labs on affinity groups, other safe spaces, but also career resources, opportunities for people from marginalized communities. If you do not have this expertise yourself, bring in others who do to help.
 - Develop a lab action plan to actively dismantle racism, led by the community and use accountability measures and periodic reviews with the lab.
 - Attend an affinity group conference to network with diverse communities and share our work with young scientists. Details on #rosetta-diversity, and if you are interested, please sign up on [this document](#) [link removed].
 - Discuss within your lab how to ensure a safe and inclusive environment.
 - A good starting point is the [Harvard Implicit Association Test](#), which allows you to examine your own implicit biases, which we all have.

Signed by 325 members of the Rosetta Commons community, including 65 principal investigators, from labs across the United States and the world