

From: [President's Office](#)
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Subject: Reflections on George Floyd: Our movement begins
Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2021 12:48:31 PM

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TO: All Employees
FROM: Dr. Jack E. Daniels, III, President
RE: Reflections on George Floyd: Our movement begins

Good afternoon Madison College colleagues,

Yesterday, former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was convicted of murdering George Floyd. Crowds erupted in joy, perhaps sharing a feeling that finally, this one ... “didn’t get away.”

Like many of you, I share the sense of relief that a just verdict was delivered and I hold hope for the significance of an equally just sentencing. Yet emotions remain mixed. The verdict does not change the horrific way Mr. Floyd was killed. Nor does it change the fact that there have been—and continue to be—countless other people of color who are mistreated or have been killed by law enforcement officials who feel they are untouchable and above the law themselves. This verdict brings hope that like crimes will be adjudicated similarly and police officers will begin to be held accountable when their power is abused. As investigations unfold, hope must continue for answers on behalf of Daunte Wright, Adam Toledo and so many others who met death prematurely by law enforcement.

This verdict **informs and demands all of us to make good on the movement** sparked last May in the wake of Mr. Floyd’s murder. **What are we going to do going forward to make as big of an impact as possible toward our commitment to equity and inclusion?**

It starts with **respect**. Respect of those whose lived experiences are different from our own. It is a time to understand the cultural history of Black, Indigenous and People of Color and the effect that history has had on the growth and maturity of these individuals and groups. Understanding the history of discrimination and continued disrespect and ill-treatment of Black, Indigenous and People of Color is necessary to make forward progress.

- Our movement begins with a **strong educational basis**. We must be able to be welcoming, sensitive to individuals’ experiences, and provide the necessary support to ensure success.
- Our movement begins with **understanding differences**. And respecting those differences.
- Our movement begins with us **acknowledging our biases** and embracing

a willingness to **do something about them.**

- Our movement begins **collaboratively** – with all of us working together to ensure that those who are underserved, underrepresented and disenfranchised find a **safe and secure place to learn, maintain their individuality and ultimately succeed.**
- Our movement begins with us **practicing anti-racism** and embedding that framework in our policies and processes. We must continue the hard conversations on race and support actions and policies that move us toward being an anti-racist college.
- Our movement begins with us **ensuring our workforce reflects our student body.**
- Our movement begins with us **not accepting racism, discrimination and disrespect.**
- Our movement begins with our **connection to the community - listening and responding in critical ways.**
- Our movement begins with **engaging** our local corporations and businesses, and providing a workforce that reflects equity, inclusiveness, and has the competencies necessary for career and personal growth.
- Our movement begins with **being socially active, both individually and as a college.** As the late representative from Georgia and civil rights activist, John Lewis, stated “When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something.”

Our movement begins and never ends. We cannot stop making life better for those who are so desperately in need of help . . . of hope. As former President Obama remarked, “Hope is the thing inside us that insists, despite all the evidence to the contrary, that something better awaits us if we have the courage to reach for it and to work for it and to fight for it.”

At Madison College, we commit ourselves to the success of our students and the communities we serve.

May our movement bring a brighter tomorrow,

Jack E. Daniels, III, PhD
President