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**Subject:** Justice is a Verb, Not a Noun  
**From:** Tammeil Gilkerson

**Attachments:** Peralta CCD Benefits Mental Health Services. 04.07.2020[1].pdf,

Dear Laney Community,

# #SAYTHEIRNAMES

**ERIC GARNER - JOHN CRAWFORD III - MICHAEL BROWN - EZEKIEL  
DANTE PARKER - MICHELLE CUSSEAU - LAQUAN MC  
TANISHA ANDERSON - AKAI GURLEY - TAMIR RICE - RUMAIN  
JERAME REID - GEORGE MANN - MATTHEW AJIBADE - FRANK  
NATASHA MCKENNA - TONY ROBINSON - ANTHONY HILL - MARVIN  
PHILLIP WHITE - ERIC HARRIS - WALTER SCOTT - WILLIAM CHAMBERLAIN  
ALEXIA CHRISTIAN - BRENDON GLENN - VICTOR MANUEL  
JONATHAN SANDERS - FREDDIE BLUE - JOSEPH  
SALVADO ELLSWOOD - SANDRA BLAND - ALBERT JOSEPH  
DARRIUS STEWART - BILLY RAY DAVIS - SAMUEL  
MICHAEL SABBIE - BRIAN KEITH DAY - CHRISTIAN  
TROY ROBINSON - ASSHAMS PHAROAH MANLEY - FELIX  
KEITH HARRISON MCLEOD - JUNIOR PROSPER - LAMONTE  
PATERSON BROWN - DOMINIC HUTCHINSON - ANTHONY /  
ALONZO SMITH - TYREE CRAWFORD - INDIA KAGER - LA'VAN'  
MICHAEL LEE MARSHALL - JAMAR CLARK - RICHARD  
NATHANIEL HARRIS PICKETT - BENNI LEE TIGNOR - MIGUEL  
MICHAEL NOEL - KEVIN MATTHEWS - BETTIE  
QUINTONIO LEGRIER - KEITH CHILDRESS JR. - JANET  
RANDY NELSON - ANTRONIE SCOTT - WENDELL CE  
DAVID JOSEPH - CALIN ROQUEMORE - DYZHAWN  
CHRISTOPHER DAVIS - MARCO LOUIS - DETERR**

CHRISTOPHER DAVIS - MARCO LOOD - PETER  
TORREY ROBINSON - DARIUS ROBINSON - KEVIN  
MARY TRUXILLO - DEMARCUS SEMER - WILLIE  
TERRILL THOMAS - SYLVILLE SMITH - ALTON S  
PHILANDO CASTILE - TERENCE CRUTCHER - PAUL  
ALTERIA WOODS - JORDAN EDWARDS - AARON BAILEY -  
FOSTER - STEPHON CLARK - ANTWON ROSE II - BOTHA  
PAMELA TURNER - DOMINIQUE CLAYTON - ATATIANA JEI  
CHRISTOPHER WHITFIELD - CHRISTOPHER MC  
ERIC REASON - MICHAEL LORENZO DEAN - BREONNA  
G E O R G E F L O

I've struggled to write something to you all that adequately articulates my anger and pain over the abhorrent act of excessive force and police brutality that killed George Floyd. While I am outraged, absolutely outraged, about the murder of George Floyd, I am also angry with the institutions and individuals who have found their voice (now that there are visuals), to denounce the appalling history of racist harassment, assault and violence that is rooted so deeply in the legacy of the United States.

The epidemic of police violence against Black people and other communities of color is not new. According to a police shooting database tracked by [The Washington Post](#) since January 1, 2015, 1,252 Black people have been shot and killed by the police—and these are just the ones we know of. And it should be no surprise to anyone that Black Americans are killed by police at a much higher rate than White Americans—more than twice—when they account for less than 13 percent of the population of the United States.

George Floyd sadly joins the list of too many who have lost their lives because there has been a lack of accountability, a lack of outrage, and a lack of taking responsibility to make true reform by listening to the voices in the community.

The epidemic of police violence against Black people and other communities of color is a product of white supremacist systems, structures and conditions that withhold access to basic human rights. It is only when we no longer condone -- through action or inaction -- the terror and intimidation seen in the laws, policies, and allocation of resources nationwide that we can see change.

These systems and structures also perpetuate [othering](#) and create the conditions for fissures in and among communities that detract from solidarity and action. When will we focus on what matters—racial injustice, reform of the criminal justice system, economic injustice, LGBTQIA+ and human rights, voting rights, police brutality, environmental injustice, access to healthcare and a quality education? Of course, this is not an exhaustive list of areas where these dynamics influence outcomes.

Here in Oakland, a White child born in the Oakland Hills has a life expectancy of 85; whereas, a Black child born in West Oakland has a life expectancy of 70 -- 15 fewer years. Data also says that 27 percent

of Black families in California live below the poverty line (\$24,399 annual household income) in comparison to 16 percent of all California families.

California Community Colleges serve 72 percent of all Black undergraduates with CSU and UC at nine (9) percent and three (3) percent respectively. Over 20 percent of our student community at Laney identify as Black/African-American, and that number doesn't include those who identify as multi-racial. But if we look at our success rates as a system, we must realize our role as well. Of Black students in California Community Colleges only:

- Three (3) percent transfer within two (2) years;
- 35 percent transfer within six (6) years; and
- 37 percent earn a certificate, degree or transfer within six (6) years.

However, recent research from the [RP Group's Through the Gate Study](#) shows that once Black students have achieved key milestones at or near the "transfer gate", 75 percent of them actually transfer—the highest of any ethnic group.



I continue to believe in the mission, vision and values of the California Community Colleges and the work we do here at Laney College. I've shared many times before that I believe our collective work is the antidote to these systems, structures and conditions, but we must be willing to continue to evaluate how our college struggles within this same context and remain committed to our own change and transformation—both individually and collectively.

As we each deal with the different emotions and needs that may arise, I want to encourage us to find

ways for us to talk, share, heal, and design collective solutions. We are working together districtwide to create venues and spaces for these conversations. Please look out for more information.

I know this history, these systemic issues and these events continue to retraumatize many of you and want to encourage you to reach out and access our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that offers an array of resources to support your physical and mental wellbeing. (Please see the attachment.)

Let our collective uprising be a recommitment to ensuring access to a quality education that provides students and employees with the opportunity to be free from harm and assault, have access to economic security, and the emotional safety to learn and work.

Let us remember that justice is a verb, not a noun.

Tammeil



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pronouns: She/Her or They/Them

**Dream. Flourish. Succeed.**

