

Antiracism Resolution

We, the faculty and staff of the West Virginia University College of Law, oppose and condemn all forms of racial injustice, bias, and discrimination — systemic, institutional, implicit, or otherwise — that continue to blight our nation almost two and a half centuries after its founding.

Jacob Blake, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Eric Garner, Michael Brown Jr., Tamir Rice, and Philando Castile. So many others. It is enough. It has to stop.

We recognize that—for most of us—our understanding regarding the impact of institutional racism and implicit bias is limited by white privilege and life experiences. We also acknowledge the petition of eight hundred WVU students, faculty, staff, and alumni who lament being “exhausted” because “for too long” people of color have not been “valued, included, appreciated, or respected.” As their petition repeatedly emphasizes, “words without action are meaningless.”

We have heard you. We have seen you. We take action now.

While our efforts will and should reach beyond the College of Law, we hold ourselves accountable for taking the following actions to combat the effects of systemic racism within the College. We resolve to:

- Continue to learn about racism in all its forms so that we are better prepared to dismantle racism within our college and community;
- Adopt a comprehensive diversity plan and commit to examining our programs, policies, and practices so that we can correct inequalities and move toward becoming a more strongly antiracist institution;
- Educate our students about racial and social justice issues both inside and outside the classroom;
- Implement mandatory diversity training for faculty and staff at the College of Law;
- Address issues of diversity and inclusion during 1L orientation;
- Explicitly consider diversity in our recruitment and retention of students, faculty, and staff;
- Expand deep dialogues among the administration, faculty, staff, and students on issues of racial inclusion;
- Encourage faculty, staff, and student leaders to participate in the LGBTQ+ Center’s Anti-Racist and Gender-Inclusive Safe Zone Training;
- Convene a focus group where faculty and staff can receive feedback from students of color;
- Listen to our community of color and take steps to address any specific concerns that they bring to our attention;
- Consult with other marginalized groups and engage with our broader community, including our alumni, to advance racial justice on Law School Hill, the campuses of West Virginia University, and beyond.

At this pivotal moment, the faculty and staff speak with one voice in joining millions of other Americans of every race and ethnicity in saying that “Black Lives Matter.”

Mountaineers will only be truly free when we all respect the dignity and worth of Black lives.

*Adopted by the WVU College of Law Faculty on October 30, 2020,
and by the WVU College of Law Staff on November 4, 2020*