

Estimado National Hispanic Science Network,

On Monday, May 25, 2020, we witnessed George Floyd, a Black man, gasping for air while now former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin knelt on his neck in the act of police brutality and hate. We all watched on with horror and felt a great sense of grief and anger. Together, we also learned of George Floyd's subsequent death and were overcome with sadness.

Today, the Early Career Leadership Committee of the National Hispanic Science Network expresses our deepest condolences to his family, and our collective outrage over his death and the deaths of countless other Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/os people. Pervasive racism and discrimination against all Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/os people mar American history. This history has created and sustained institutional racism and oppression that devalues and strips people of their fundamental human rights on the basis of the color of their skin.

In solidarity, we precede our statement for justice of the entire Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/os community with *all*. We emphasize that we include *all* Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/os colleagues that also share an identity as a member of the LGBTQ+ community, as a woman, or as a member of other groups that experience oppression. As scholars, we must take this moment to examine our role within the broader community. We must act as agents of change to ensure inclusivity and justice for our colleagues and in opposition of anti-Black sentiment and colorism. Without this examination, we sustain the current system of oppression that upholds an institution of privilege meant to support colorism and anti-Black policies, practices, and beliefs.

First, we assert that all NHSN members should openly examine our privilege as Latinx/a/o scholars and/or as scholars that conduct research in the Latinx/a/o community. By definition, an ally is a person who supports another person or community, including combining and uniting resources to create mutual benefits. There are many avenues to serve as an ally to all of our Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/o colleagues. Our status as scholars empowers us to serve as powerful allies. Thus, an open examination of our privilege will help us ensure that we not only act as beneficiaries of our status but also create opportunities for others, including all Black, Caribbean, Afro-Latinx/a/o colleagues. Many members have indeed experienced racism and discrimination firsthand. Nevertheless, this does not preclude any of us from supporting or engaging in practices that are harmful and unjust – including remaining silent during times of injustice. We cannot ignore the existence of colorism and anti-Black sentiment that is also prevalent in the Latinx/a/o community.

We are all endowed with the abilities to both discern and explore racism and discrimination, and must use these to generate and transfer knowledge to students, mentees, lab members, staff, and the general community. In the pursuit of justice, we can share practices in our laboratories and research environments that are paramount to changing the institution of privilege built on an ideology that favors people on the basis of their skin color. We must create and fortify an environment that supports continual conversation within our membership on anti-Blackness and colorism and create a collective social consciousness and responsiveness to ensure justice.

Second, we arrive at the conclusion that we must move steadfastly towards the active recruitment, retention, inclusion, and support the promotion of all Black, Caribbean, and Afro-

Latinx/a/o researchers, scholars, and students in our membership and at our national conferences and other scholarly activities - including prioritizing citing the works of scholars of color. Our Network's point is to make significant advances in the field of substance use research, explicitly highlighting the diversity of our community. Investigations by all Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/o scholars must be represented in our scholarly activities, too.

Finally, we emphasize that we must all take action in solidarity of all Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/o scholars and greater community. It is only through this initiative that we will develop policies and practices that are inclusive of our colleagues and community. We assert that we must all commit to transfer knowledge gained in our experiences to grow our Network in inclusivity and justice.

As early-career scientists, we urge our Network members to make the following steps to:

- **Support:** We call for all to support organizations and movements endeavoring in work towards justice including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Black Lives Matter movement (<https://www.naacp.org> and blacklivesmatters.com).
- **Partner:** We must actively seek to join, collaborate, and partner with Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/o scientific networks.
- **Learn:** We call for all scholars to continue to learn. In doing so, we must support scholarly discussions on racism and discrimination and colorism in America and in the Latinx/a/o community (See Council on Social Work Education Center for Diversity and Social & Economic Justice: <https://www.cswe.org/Centers-Initiatives/Centers/Center-for-Diversity.aspx>).
- **Civic Participation:** We call for all to register to vote. Election Day is only one of many important dates to vote. We must also participate in the primaries and local elections.

Standing as witnesses to the racism and discrimination that all Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/o communities continually experience is numbing. We believe that taking actionable steps will support our community's healing and growth. The violent death of George Floyd and countless other Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/o community members including Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshad Brooks, and countless others, requires us to take concrete steps to address systemic and ingrained anti-Black racism and colorism.

We at the National Hispanic Science Network and the Early Career Leadership Committee support all Black, Caribbean, and Afro-Latinx/a/o people and the people that share an identity with the LGBTQ+ community, women, and other groups. **We oppose racism, colorism, and discrimination and commit to inclusivity and justice.**

Unidos en la solidaridad,

Early Career Leadership Committee

National Hispanic Science Network