



## A Message *from the* OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 3, 2020

Dear West Virginia State Family:

Recently, our country has witnessed several tragic and racially-motivated incidents. The heartbreaking deaths of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Breonna Taylor in Louisville and Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia were all preventable incidents that were results of racial ignorance and hate. Watching the news unfold, we are equally disturbed and share a deep sense of concern and anguish.

As an Institution forged from the blood and sweat saturated dirt where slaves once laid, to the halls in which Carter G. Woodson once walked and the airfields where Tuskegee Airmen once trained, West Virginia State University takes great responsibility in providing a nurturing and inclusive working and learning environment. To our students, faculty and staff, though our doors are closed and halls are empty in response to COVID-19 protocols, we still stand in solidarity with you and all those who face ongoing systematic marginalization, racism and oppression.

For the past week, we have had discussions to determine the best medium to respond to the events that are occurring in our nation. There is a prepared video message that will be shared in the days ahead with the West Virginia State family and will be made available throughout all social media platforms.

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that" - Martin Luther King, Jr.

R. Charles Byers, Ph.D.  
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