

June 1, 2020

Re: Events of the past week

Dear College of Nursing Family,

The events of the past week have quickly taken over our consciousness, surpassing even the global COVID-19 pandemic. It is impossible to remain untouched, especially as the unrest sweeping the nation has touched our own city. I am reminded of this quote from Desmond Tutu: *If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.*

And I recognized I simply could not let this situation go by without reaching out to you all. You are no doubt shocked, saddened, maddened, and many other things in between. I know I am.

The trumpet call to justice is not one that can be easily ignored. Faced with the stark reminder that we have friends and colleagues who do not have constitutionally protected rights or privileges even in modern-day America, we are tempted to respond while at the same time grieving the loss of freedom and well-being for so many.

In our college, I have often thought we created a microcosm where we valued equity and each other, where we respected differences of opinion, and prized diversity. This is where we must continue to focus our efforts. We are already living in a changed world because of the pandemic. We can only hope that change for the better will come from this. That change will be bittersweet because it's built on the loss and sorrow of others.

In our college, our mission has always been to educate future nurses to practice with excellence and compassion. That mission has not changed.

I would like to say, like I have said through the weeks of this pandemic, that this too will pass, and we'll come out the other end stronger. To say that now would be trivializing the enormous hurt, injustice, and bias experienced by so many Americans. So, instead, I will say this: reach inside of you for the resilience that I know you have; be the best colleague you can be. We cannot try (indeed, we must not) to mitigate the situation with platitudes, but we **can** ignite the spirit of compassion and respect within our community.

Please be safe.

Sincerely,

*Usha*

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