

Dear Students & Advisors of the Loyola Community,

I write to you today with the sobering acknowledgement that many of our students, advisors, and organizations feel tremendous pain due to recent incidents targeting our Black and African-American communities.

Know that SAGA's team is here for you, and we are committed to doing everything within our realm of control to serve as advocates and allies to our community. Over the coming weeks, the department will be sharing further resources available on LUCommunity for you to engage with Critical Race Theory and anti-racist frameworks. Note that this messaging is a continuance of our commitment to providing spaces to learn about diversity and social justice.

I encourage you to know your rights and understand the risks associated with social justice work before you act on it. Strategy is not always something acknowledged in our civil rights history, but from Rosa Parks to Bree Newsome, there were plans in place to address every possible outcome. Below are some ways to learn about engaging in justice work in impactful ways.

**Your physical and mental health is our priority.** One of the greatest forms of justice work is self-care. Students, you have access to mental health resources provided by the [Wellness Center](#). SAGA is particularly proud of our Black and African-American student leaders who manage our organizations and chapters, and we acknowledge that the emotional labor has been intense. Advisors, SAGA cares about your mental and physical well-being too. In times like this, advisors become our heroes, fulfilling a commitment to support students while managing their mental and physical well-being. The [Employee Assistance Program](#) exists to support SAGA's advisors during times like this.

If you are concerned about yourself or someone you know who calls Loyola home, consider submitting a referral through the [Center for Student Assistance and Advocacy](#). This is absolutely a time for advisors and students to come together to feel, to heal, and to care for each other.

**SAGA has resources in place to build community.** Mobilization is grounded in every civil rights movement. Talking with supportive friends, mentors, and advisors can often serve to manage stress and reduce feelings of isolation. You are not alone.

SAGA is home to over 45 registered student organizations, sororities, and fraternities whose missions are grounded in diversity and cultural pride. [LUCommunity](#) is a great place to start in seeking out connections to help you feel grounded, as well as identifying ways our community can fight ongoing systemic racism and support #BlackLivesMatter together.

**SAGA empowers you to engage in social justice.** Sometimes this means engaging in protests, service, donations, or Community Circles. Sometimes this means holding your family members

accountable. Sometimes this means acknowledging the racial privilege many of us at Loyola hold and working through feelings of anger, guilt, and sadness.

As folks from historically marginalized communities will often share, experiencing the emotions that come with racial privilege are not enough- we must learn to use our privilege in productive ways. This is unique to every individual, and there is no one way to engage in social justice.

[Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs](#) has incredible resources for students to learn about social justice and advocacy. I want to be intentional about highlighting this department, as SDMA's team and student leaders have demonstrated an active commitment for years to supporting students by fighting social and systemic injustice.

**SAGA is engaging in justice work, too.** We are doing the work to learn, to heal, and to grow through mutual accountability in our community. Our community will come out of this summer stronger and more equipped to address incidents of racial discrimination. We are already a strong team and have resources to help you understand white privilege, the Black/African American/African Diaspora, and the emotional vulnerability that often comes with understanding social identity and its role in facilitating systemic racism.

I wish you health and healing, and also encourage you to take this time to truly understand what our community is experiencing right now. SAGA's team is available to support you, and to refer you to the correct resources. Please join SAGA on IG @loyolasaga to find resources grounded in anti-racist frameworks.

In solidarity,

Marissa Lucchesi

Director, *Student Activities and Greek Affairs*