

November 2021

We are following up on our two previous letters related to the long-term legacy of racism as the fight for justice is far from over. The killings of countless Black individuals by law enforcement, failure to prosecute those who kill Black individuals, and additional acts of discrimination and oppression affect the emotional, physical, and spiritual health of Black and African-American individuals. We unequivocally condemn all acts of racism, bias, and hatred.

We are still channeling our anger and grief into an ongoing commitment to the Black Lives Matter movement both because it is the right thing to do and so we can best serve the needs of our campus. We are doing our own ongoing work to address racism, biases, and other systemic and individual factors to serve the movement for Black lives. Here are some updates on recent and upcoming efforts we are making to address racism in our center, on our campus, and in greater society:

- “Rising Up and Standing Strong” is drop-in support group for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color to discuss some of the unique challenges they face. Group provides an affirming and empowering environment to explore identities, relationships, current/ongoing/previous challenges, and struggles related to attending a predominantly white institution. Group is led by two facilitators of color. This is done in a collaboration with the Office of Multicultural and Leadership Development.
 - If you would like to participate in group or want more information, email Melanie Fisher, MA, MPH (mfisher@fgcu.edu).
- CAPS staff members, including trainees and administrative staff, are actively encouraged and supported in completing the Diversity and Inclusion Certificate Program through FGCU’s Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance. Our 2021-22 goal is 100% staff completion.
- Hiring two therapists of color in fall 2021.
- CAPS’ Inclusion and Culture Change Committee focuses on personal and professional development and center-wide initiatives to best serve the needs of our students; committee began in Summer 2020 and meets monthly.
- CAPS 2021 Staff Summer Book Club: read and discussed “The Body is Not an Apology” by Sonya Renee Taylor (2018); an “intersectional, global, difference-celebrating movement that knows our age, race, size, gender, dis/ability, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, class, and every other human attribute are assets toward unapologetic radical self-love and living.”
- Continued Diversity and Social Justice approach to our masters- and doctoral-level training programs; we have four master’s interns (from the FGCU Clinical Mental Health Program), one doctoral practicum student, and three doctoral interns for the 2021-22 school year.
- CAPS staff’s continued leadership on the Safe Zone Team, FGCU Diversity and Inclusion Committee, FGCU Pride, First Generation Advisory Group, University Care Committee, and other important inclusion- and justice-focused initiatives on campus.
- Hiring a Diversity Specialist/Staff Clinician in fall 2020.
- CAPS staff continue to participate in numerous trainings and events on ending anti-Black racism, addressing the unique mental health needs of Black individuals, combatting white supremacy, and providing culturally competent mental healthcare
- Culturally responsive and affirming mental healthcare from all CAPS providers that adheres to the ethical standards of our professional organizations: American Psychological Association, American Counseling Association, and American Psychiatric Association
- CAPS 2020 Staff Summer Book Club: read and discussed “White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism” by Robin DiAngelo (2018).

Organizations to consider supporting, getting involved with, and/or donating to:

- Black Lives Matter: www.blacklivesmatter.com
- NAACP: www.naACP.org; FGCU Chapter (@fgcunaACP on Instagram)
- Color of Change: www.colorofchange.org
- The Audre Lorde Project: www.alp.org
- Academics for Black Survival and Wellness: www.academics4blacklives.com
- Showing Up for Racial Justice: www.showingupforracialjustice.org

Available mental health resources:

- CAPS 24/7/365 Ears Helpline: 239-745-3277 (TTY)
- FGCU Employee Assistance Program 24/7/365 Line: 239-278-7435
- FGCU Community Counseling Center: 239-745-4777, www.fgcu.edu/mariecollege/counseling/communitycounseling/
- Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective: www.beam.community
- Liberate: Meditation app for People of Color (free for iPhones and Androids)
- Ujima, Inc.: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community: 844-77-UJIMA, www.ujimacommunity.org
- Family, Community, and Self-Care Kit for Healing from Cultural Trauma from the Association of Black Psychologists: <https://tinyurl.com/ycc3ccol>
- National Text Crisis Line (24/7/365): 'HELLO' to 741-741
- Black Lives Matter Meditation for Healing Racial Trauma: <https://tinyurl.com/yalvajcm>
- The Safe Place: Minority mental health app geared towards the Black community (free for iPhones and Androids)
- The Four Bodies: A Holistic Toolkit for Coping with Racial Trauma: <https://tinyurl.com/y9wv6l18>
- The Homecoming Podcast with Dr. Thema: <https://tinyurl.com/ybv99wqa>

FREE opportunities for others to begin or continue to learn and engage in personal and professional work to end racism:

- Talking About Race Web Portal: <https://tinyurl.com/y7kqh5ky>
- The Anti-Racist Starter Pack: 40 TV Series, Documentaries, Movies, TED Talks, and Books to Add to Your List: <https://tinyurl.com/y7aqnifo>
- Scaffolded Anti-Racism Resources: <https://tinyurl.com/yb8xyzn3>
- Anti-Racism Resources for White People: <https://tinyurl.com/yd2jhbq8>
- Opportunities for White People in the Fight for Racial Justice: Moving from Ally to Accomplice: www.whiteaccomplices.org

We encourage our FGCU community to be active in the fight for racial justice and we will continue to identify and share additional resources and opportunities on our social media pages to engage in this movement.

In solidarity,

CAPS staff

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