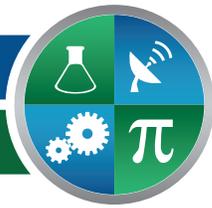


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## Great Minds in STEM Statement on Racism Across America

June 1, 2020

We are deeply saddened by the tragic death of George Floyd. It was an inhumane act that once again exposed the systemic and individual racism that exists in our nation. Racism has been our pandemic for generations, but now, overlaid with an emerging biological pandemic, the conditions were ripe for an explosive outcome.

While Great Minds in STEM will not validate or condone violence of any kind, including and especially when that violence is directed at law enforcement officials and private property, we recognize the deep collective yearning to speak out and act against racism, inequity and social injustice. We must stand on the side of what's right when we witness it, and most of all we must extend our hand to lift those who continue to suffer from prejudice.

The turmoil unfolding in our cities is so heartbreaking, painful and frustrating – but sadly, not surprising. Imagine the emotions that would consume you if the life of a brother or sister were extinguished by someone motivated by racism. Now imagine that pain occurring non-stop, generation after generation, with no end in sight. That reflection should give you some insight into why this moment is so perilous.

GMiS works every day to ensure that more people from underserved communities have access to degrees and careers in STEM because we know this will give them the best shot at pursuing the American Dream. Perhaps STEM degrees can even save lives. But it's also never far from our minds that the services we provide are only necessary in the first place because the abundant fruits of our academic, professional and governmental institutions are not readily available to all Americans equally. The death of George Floyd and the protests they've sparked are a tragic reminder that we have to change the minds and hearts of the people in our nation in order for real, permanent change to occur.

We hope and pray that continuing demonstrations are peaceful, and that the outrage that so many of our fellow Americans feel can be channeled into constructive dialogue and positive actions that move us toward the more perfect union promised in our constitution, a union that provides equal rights and opportunities to all. We look forward to continuing this conversation and leading these endeavors in the days and months to come.

Together, with leading organizations, universities, schools, businesses, and our government, we can work to heal our nation one day at a time with deliberate and positive steps to mend the injustice we see today.

Anna M. Park, J.D.  
CEO and Board Member  
Great Minds in STEM

Juan Rivera, Ph.D.  
Chairman of the Board  
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