



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH
COLLEGES

Joint statement from the leadership of the Hobart College Alumni Association, William Smith College Alumnae Association, and the Hobart and William Smith Afro Latino Alumni and Alumnae Association (ALAA)

We, the leadership of the Hobart Alumni Association, the William Smith Alumnae Association, and the HWS Afro Latino Alumni and Alumnae Association (ALAA), share profound concern about the divisions in our society. In light of recent conversations on campus about systemic racism, words and actions of local elected officials, and against the backdrop of social unrest stemming from the senseless murder of George Floyd and other innocent people of color, the legacy of hatred, systemic racism and violence must be confronted and broken in our nation.

We stand with all alums and current students, faculty and members of the HWS administration and community and say Black Lives Matter and systemic racism is real and must end. For those who have endured abuse, discrimination, and mistreatment – your lives matter. We have been in conversation with President Jacobsen and she shares the same values and ideals stated above. This is a declaration of our shared commitment to ensure that Hobart and William Smith Colleges are an even more inclusive, supportive, and welcoming community where discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

As leaders, we want to make clear:

- We will not tolerate discrimination of any kind based on age, ancestry, citizenship, color, gender expression, gender identity, genetic material, marital status, medical condition, national origin, physical or mental disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other classification protected by law.
- Any form of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or threat — whether verbal, physical, or visual — based on any of these characteristics is a form of discrimination. Whenever we witness these acts, or they are brought to our attention, we will call them out and intervene.
- We commit to cultivating a culture where all feel safe to express themselves, share creative and intellectual work, and take independent action to deepen our collective capacity to be even more inclusive, welcoming, and aware of implicit bias.
- We do this in good faith and with positive intent, listening and adjusting as we gain insight from the course of action outlined below.

Building on the good work and initiative of the Colleges' leadership, and those who came before us, we commit to five specific actions. We will report our progress to the Board of Trustees and the leadership of the Associations on a regular basis so that we are accountable and transparent.

1. We will educate and orient ourselves to be even more authentic, effective advocates and allies of diversity and inclusion with greater self-awareness of our inherent biases.
2. We will encourage our membership to participate in, and where possible we will facilitate, programs designed to deepen our awareness and capacity to act in even more inclusive and welcoming ways.
3. As we develop alumni and alumnae content and programming, we will create opportunities that bring to light these issues to generate greater awareness and dialogue.
4. We will encourage and support efforts by the HWS administration to re-examine institutional policies, practices, and culture to eliminate any implicit bias and unconscious discrimination.
5. We pledge enthusiastically to engage and work with future alumni and alumnae (current students) in fostering a truly diverse learning community.

These are initial and necessary steps forward.

We do this in support of the very best ideals and values shared amongst us. We hope to boost the Colleges' capacity to amplify the many voices in the chorus of HWS alumni, alumnae and friends who oppose discrimination. We strive for our respective Associations to be a home for all of the Colleges' graduates. In so doing, we can empower and inspire HWS alumni and alumnae to be a force for good on campus and in the world.

Respectfully,

Ludwig P. Gaines '88, President, Hobart College Alumni Association

Kirra Henick-Kling Guard '08, MAT '09, President, William Smith Alumnae Association

Rick Wallace '91, Incoming Co-President, Afro Latino Alumni and Alumnae Association

Mark A. Darden '87, P'17, Outgoing President, Afro Latino Alumni and Alumnae Association