



# Black Law Students Association

## University of Minnesota Law School

Dear Peers,

The heartbreaking video released earlier this week, showing George Floyd, an African American man, being pinned down and killed by Minneapolis police officers has deeply rattled our group at the University as it has millions of others. We can all easily see our own faces, and those of our friends, family, and colleagues in the images of George Floyd pressed against the pavement with a knee to the back of his neck. For generations now, our nation has witnessed these tragic scenes of unjustifiable violence against black people - scenes which should disturb us all regardless of race.

We share the grief that has befallen our community and commiserate with the family of George Floyd for the needless death of yet another black man at the hands of those meant to protect and serve us. We are calling for justice for those like George Floyd or Eric Garner who, through their last breaths, could only say a phrase we have come to hear two times too many: “Please, I can’t breathe.”

Times like these are reminders of why many of us have come to UMN Law—to become lawyers and excite the change we wish to see in our society. It is all of our responsibility to make our voices heard against the injustice of the unchecked bias and brutality in our policing culture.

There is a long way to go in our fight for equality, but we can all be part of paving the way for a more just and compassionate society. As future lawyers, we have the unique ability to not only change the systemic policies, laws and regulations that encourage the disparity that many of us face, but we can also reshape the climate of race-relations for our future generations.

As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “A riot is the language of the unheard” and it is as true today as it was 53 years ago. We urge you, our fellow peers, to let your voices be heard - to join the movement and get involved with organizations that are working every day to combat the injustice and social disparity people of color and minority groups face here in the Twin Cities and in our country. We are grateful for those who have been protesting, donating, and volunteering in an effort to help rebuild our community and secure justice and fair treatment for the Black members of our nation.

While one officer has been charged, our community cannot, and should not stop the fight. Please call and email your representatives, police union and County Attorney’s office to ensure that justice is fully served and that the memory of George Floyd will continue to live on in the fight against racism.

Sincerely,  
BLSA