



Pennsylvania Black Conference on Higher Education, Inc.

July 8, 2016

Dear Colleagues:

In light of the most recent events involving the police shooting deaths of Alton Sterling in Louisiana and Philando Castile in Minnesota and the deaths of the five officers in Dallas, TX, we want to express our sorrow, outrage and deep concern by these events. We mourn the loss of Mr. Sterling, Mr. Castile, and the many other unarmed black men who lost their lives at the hands of the police over the last several months. We also mourn the loss of the officers who lost their lives in Dallas.

While we do respect and support law enforcement, in general, we do call into question the actions of officers who are captured on video essentially murdering Alton Sterling and Philando Castile. Furthermore, we call into question a judicial system which has exonerated and excused officers in similar cases, e.g., Eric Garner in New York, Tamir Rice in Cleveland, etc. Clearly, something is happening in our society when the lives of black people do not seem to matter. To this end, the Pennsylvania Black Conference on Higher Education is calling on our members to reflect upon these events, contact the offices of our Senators and U.S. Representatives to demand law enforcement reform and that gun control laws and regulations be changed for the good of all Americans.

Also, please take this opportunity to connect with students on your respective campuses to offer them comfort, solace and refuge in your offices; and, refer them to your campus' counseling centers should they need to speak with a clinician. I also encourage you to organize symposia and campus-wide discussions on your respective campuses to talk candidly about these events and to work to bring about racial and cultural understanding. Our black students need to feel like they are not alone; and, indeed they are not. They have allies in us.

Finally, let us continue to pray for all of the families who have been affected by this violence, including law enforcement. We continue the fight for equity and equality!

Sincerely,

John B. Craig, Ed.D.  
President