



## **ACTION PLAN TO COMBAT RACISM**

### **UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS**

**As of November 2, 2018**

In accordance with our University of St. Thomas mission of advancing the common good and convictions of dignity and diversity, we seek to create and sustain a diverse, equitable and inclusive community. As such, the university is committed to this Action Plan to Combat Racism. The action plan will be layered to reach faculty, staff and students. Some actions will be implemented as soon as possible, with current students in mind. Other actions will begin now, with a longer timeline.

We will continually build on this list of actions and incorporate additional ideas from students and our community in the days and weeks to come. The implementation details for many of these actions require further work, and we will do this together.

The current action steps include, but are not limited to:

#### ***Short-Term Actions***

**CAMPUSWIDE MEETING:** We cancelled classes and held a campus-wide conversation on October 31 that marked the beginning of our collective commitment to a new action plan to combat racism at St. Thomas. More than 5,000 students, faculty and staff attended. The event had educational and healing components and a commitment to action. We will offer additional education and healing throughout the year on campus, including smaller-scale, deeper discussion opportunities.

**CONVERSATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM:** Information was sent to faculty on Monday, October 22, to encourage direct and culturally-sensitive conversations in the classroom that acknowledge the Brady Hall incident and provide an opportunity for conversation. Additional training and communications tools for faculty are being developed to help them with these conversations. We will also develop an opportunity for student feedback to better track how these conversations are perceived.

**LAUNCH ANTI-HATE CAMPAIGN:** We will prominently, visibly, unabashedly and on an on-going basis display symbols and messages throughout our campus that hate is not welcome here. We started by producing door hangers and buttons using the Anti-Racism Coalition graphic, "Racism Stops with Me." Residence Life also produced signage in residence halls with the message "Hate is not Welcome Here."

**TRAUMA RESOURCES:** We have hired a counselor to begin to provide trauma resources for students and others on campus, with a particular focus on our population of color. We will increase the diversity of our counseling staff.

**CAMPUSWIDE ANTI-BIAS TRAINING:** A team has been launched and is meeting on November 7 to plan our course of action to provide anti-bias training by the end of the academic year to every St. Thomas student, staff and faculty. This training will include bystander training to broaden the number of allies on campus.



**BIAS INCIDENT AND HATE CRIME REPORTING:** We will educate our community about Minnesota's hate crime laws so all better understand how hate crimes are investigated, prosecuted and penalized. We will encourage students, faculty and staff to report hate crimes and bias incidents and provide clear guidance for and ease of reporting on our website. In addition, the university will be transparent regarding reports of bias-motivated incidents in the residence halls, including action steps and response.

**IMPROVE CAMPUS CLIMATE IN RESIDENCE HALLS:** Residence Life will work closely with senior leadership to provide learning opportunities to residential students to improve climate and safety in the residence halls.

**CAMPUS EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT:** We will contract with an external group to comprehensively assess and make recommendations about 1.) our campus climate; 2.) student outcomes related to diversity, equity, and success (e.g., graduation/success and retention rates); and 3.) employee outcomes related to diversity and equity (compensation and retention rates).

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION RESOURCES:** We will devote resources to the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to implement these specific action steps.

**MULTICULTURAL CENTER FOR STUDENTS:** Student leaders are gathering feedback from students about the creation of a space in Anderson Student Center and its potential programming. The Administration has agreed to continue to work with students on this project.

### *Long-Term Strategies*

**SUPPORTING ANTI-RACIST PEDAGOGY AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT:** We will offer additional resources/training during New Faculty Orientation and through the Faculty Development Office to encourage and support faculty in developing and delivering rigorous anti-racist curriculum. We will support faculty and staff in finding ways to use the new core as an opportunity to infuse anti-bias into the first-year experience curriculum. We will provide more support for a wider range of faculty and staff training on anti-racism.

**COMMIT TO ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION:** We will support the study and implementation of research-based best practices on diversity, equity and inclusion.

**RECRUITING AND RETAINING DIVERSE FACULTY AND STAFF:** We will implement best practices in faculty and staff hiring to increase our employees of color. We also will develop retention strategies for our faculty and staff of color.

**RECRUIT AND RETAIN STUDENTS OF COLOR:** We will expand our recruiting strategies to increase the number of students of color who attend St. Thomas and work intentionally to retain our students of color through successful completion and graduation.

**STRENGTHEN OUR FINANCIAL AID MODEL:** We will work to ensure that our students of color have the resources they need that recognize individual circumstances and financial barriers to success. Our financial aid model must ensure both excellence and access.



**INTEGRITY AND DIVERSITY IN OUR MARKETING AND ADMISSIONS MESSAGES:** We will assess our marketing and branding messages to ensure we are marketing St. Thomas with integrity. This effort will have input from students, faculty and staff.

**COMMUNICATE OUR ACTION PLAN TO THE COMMUNITY:** A centralized hub has been created on OneStThomas to provide key resources and updates on our plan of action. We will send regular progress updates to the community and hold our leadership team and all members of our community accountable for these actions.