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Subject: Message from Chancellor Ford: Responding to the Kenosha shooting

UW-Parkside Alumni:

Once again, I am saddened and deeply troubled by the incidents of systemic injustice and police officer involved shootings of black men and women - this time in UW-Parkside's own community. My heart goes out to Jacob Blake and his family as he recovers from his injuries. We all await and expect a full and complete investigation and accountability for all those involved.

As an educator, leader, and parent, I encourage each of us to channel what I know is heartfelt energy and frustration into making our community stronger by working together to eliminate racism and injustice. Together, we must continue to pursue truth and understanding. We cannot and we must not allow injustice for many and inclusion for a select few to continue.

Now more than ever, we must embrace and share the values of dignity and respect embedded in UW-Parkside's educational foundation. I know we will continue to serve as leaders, educators, and advocates to eliminate racism and injustice, and to help our community recover and heal.

As we begin the 2020-21 academic year with the focus of our nation on our own community, we are encouraging our students, faculty, and staff to connect with campus resources for support, as we support one another and acknowledge the different emotions we are feeling: anger, fear, sadness, frustration, exhaustion, and uncertainty.

I also want to reiterate that the safety of our students, faculty, staff and security of our campus facilities are our highest priorities. While our campus is situated away from the downtown municipal buildings and business districts that have seen unrest over the past two nights, we are being very vigilant. Our University Police are monitoring events closely and getting regular updates from the Kenosha County Sheriff's Department and the City of Kenosha Police Department.

As I noted back in June after the unthinkable death of George Floyd: *"A half century ago, when the University of Wisconsin-Parkside was founded, our nation was in the midst of a cultural revolution brought about by a desire for social justice and change. We have made progress, and we also see very clearly that there is still much work to be done. The University of Wisconsin-Parkside binds us together in our shared commitment to transform lives-- our lives, the lives of our families, and the lives of members of our communities."*

Join with me in being strong advocates to bring UW-Parkside's core values of equity, diversity, and inclusion to all. As we support each other, listen to one another, and embrace our differences, these are the actions that make our university community even stronger. I know we will respond to yet another challenge and emerge stronger together.

Debbie Ford
Chancellor

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