



The State University
of New York

We have hope.

The death of George Floyd at the hands of a police officer has traumatized our nation, and thousands have rightfully taken to the streets to peacefully demand accountability and change.

The horror, that unlike so many similar incidents was caught on camera, will and must never leave our collective conscience. It has held up the largest possible mirror to our society and demonstrated the huge steps that still need to be taken to overcome a legacy of injustice and brutality, a legacy that continues to permeate institutions.

Just as disheartening is the thought of millions of members of the SUNY family watching and losing hope in our ability to do and be better.

Over the past week though, through all of the pain, we see glimmers of hope. We see it in the thousands of SUNY students and faculty who have participated in peaceful protests. We see it in police officers kneeling with their communities and crying together, sharing a raw moment of understanding and unity. We see it in the solidarity demonstrated by students of all backgrounds on social media.

But we need more. Our students and all of us in every community need healing.

During this time, you as a student should never forget the power in how unity, anger at injustices and how the need for reform can change our society for the better. Many horrible acts of our past were corrected when the people, with determination in hand and our love for one another, responded. These inherent human characteristics have brought about the change we needed at the time and that gives us great hope.

All of you have hope within you. Walking through our SUNY campuses, learning, making a career path for a better life and becoming aware of the world, gives you hope every day that our society no matter how bad it is, can correct itself.

Now more than ever, our hope is that all students never forget what they saw for those few minutes as George Floyd lost his life. We hope every student continues to remember and feel that fire and passion inside them for challenging and reversing the wrongs of our society.

That is what gives us at SUNY hope. It's you.

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch
Chairman
SUNY Board of Trustees

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Student Assembly President
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