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***A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF ASHFORD UNIVERSITY***

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Dear Ashford University Students,

I have spent the last several days, as I know many of you have, attempting to make sense of the events we as a nation have witnessed in the wake of the senseless killing of George Floyd. The names of far too many others are still freshly etched in our memories. We mourn the tragic legacy these latest deaths represent. That this has occurred against the backdrop of a global pandemic in which United States citizens of color have been disproportionately affected makes the situation even more devastating.

Our nation was founded upon a belief that it is possible to create a free society based on exalted principles of equality and social justice. Despite evidence to the contrary, we have clung to a belief that as a people we are making progress, albeit slowly, in realizing that lofty goal. As the events of this past week clearly demonstrate, we as a nation have much reflection and work ahead if we are to correct these imbalances.

Universities are based on the search for and the dissemination of truth. As an educational institution, we seek to assist with bettering the lives of our students, faculty, staff, communities, and our society through study, learning, and the pursuit of higher education. Education remains one of the equalizing factors that can propel the disadvantaged into needed opportunities that allow individuals to counter the imbalances of our society. We share an obligation as educators, learners, and citizens to take action. We must speak out against injustice and seek through the guarantees available to us as a free people, to bring about the change that will result in achieving our dream of a free and just society.

I lend my own voice in support of those suffering and who are feeling the pain of these events. I also speak on behalf of the members of the Ashford University Board of Trustees in pledging our efforts to stand behind our students, staff, and faculty from all walks of life.

Sincerely,

**CRAIG D. SWENSON, PH.D. / PRESIDENT**  
Ashford University



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