SGA Executive Staff Statements
2020–2021
June 1, 2020

America is currently going through two unprecedented situations. The first one hasn’t been seen since the Flu Pandemic of 1918 and the second hasn’t been seen since the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968. Protests in more than 250 cities have erupted all across America since the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police. As the Student Government Association, we sympathize heavily with the revolutionaries in the streets and online who are speaking out against these injustices that have gone on for too long.

It is time for a change of course in America and that includes here at the University of North Texas. On the night of May 29, a former UNT student named Jekhari Williams was tackled by four UNT police officers for not having a bike light. In response, UNT President Neal Smatresk incorrectly stated that Williams was not a student on campus in a statement released on Twitter. We condemn President Smatresk’s lackluster statement and general silence regarding allegations of police brutality on campus and throughout the country. The Student Government Association stands in accordance with the Black Student Union in the demands listed on their statement regarding this matter. We believe that these demands will help to make our campus a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all.

1.) We DEMAND the UNT System creates and enforces comprehensive racial awareness and inclusion curriculum throughout all campus departments and units, mandatory for all students, faculty, staff, and administration. This curriculum must be vetted, maintained, and overseen by a board of students, staff, and faculty of color.

2.) We DEMAND the university will institute a mandatory cultural competency course required of all students either in a first year seminar or a stand alone course integrated within Orientation and Transition Programs.
3.) We DEMAND the university will create a specific outline to address diversity and inclusion practices in the strategic plan that will increase retention rates for marginalized students, sustain diversity curriculum and training, and promote a more safe and inclusive campus.

4.) We DEMAND the university requires all members of the UNT Police Department to go through implicit bias training to prevent any future instances of police brutality as we have seen recently with the unlawful detention of UNT student Jekhari Williams, a member of our Black community.

5.) We DEMAND the university will allocate new MS/HSI financial resources towards the expansion of the multicultural center and the entirety of the Division of Equity and Diversity. We believe our students deserve a building just like the Greek Life Center to accommodate the needs of individual minoritized groups.

6.) We DEMAND The University of North Texas will increase the percentage of Black, Brown, and other marginalized identities among the faculty and staff campus-wide to match the demographic representation of our student population.

Systemic racism is individual racism with power. It is indispensable that all white and non-black allies utilize their voices to speak out against racism being perpetrated against Black Americans. This has gone on for far too long and it will only come to an end when enough people stand up and call out these injustices. Throughout this year, we put pressure on UNT President Smatresk to act swiftly and accordingly in these matters.

“Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.” – James Baldwin

With deepest sympathy,

The UNT Student Government Association Executive Board

Michael Luecke, President
Cameron Combs, Vice President

Danielle Colvin, Chief of Staff

Peyton Jackson, Deputy Chief of Staff

Detavious Hill, Outreach Director

Tommy DeJesus, Director of Diversity and Inclusion

Giovanna Gomez, Raupe Director

Evan Irvin, Eagle’s Nest Director

Gia White, Communications Director

Yaszmin Behram, Intern Program Director
June 24, 2020

Fellow Students,

It is with heavy hearts that we address you today. Here we say goodbye to two important members of our campus community. Khamey Liby, who passed away on Monday, May 11th and Drew Crow, who passed away on Friday, June 12th. Khamey was a Finance Major in the G. Brint Ryan College of Business. Drew was a Journalism Major in the Mayborn School of Journalism.

The UNT Flag on the South Library Lawn will be flown at half-staff for seven days in honor of Khamey and Drew. There will be a flag presented to both of these students' families, in remembrance of their time at UNT. Our thoughts and feelings go out to Khamey and Drew’s families, friends, and loved ones.

Respectfully,

Michael Luecke
SGA President

Cameron Combs
SGA Vice President