



June 11, 2020

Dear Dean Condon,

The Black community worldwide has been reeling over the incidents of police brutality and violence that have captured international attention in recent weeks. The Black Law Students' Association (BLSA) at Osgoode is no exception. These incidents have only underscored what we, and the wider Black community, have long known: anti-Black racism is still active in our communities, on both overt and covert levels. Whether committed in plain sight or behind closed doors, acts of anti-Black racism have devastating impacts for Black people both in Canada and abroad.

In these times, it is imperative that allies stand in solidarity with the Black community. Their support and advocacy bolsters the work that Black people have been doing for decades. BLSA has seen Osgoode share tweets on Twitter and articles on their Facebook page speaking out against recent incidents of police brutality and protest suppression, yet Osgoode's own voice has been missing from the outcry.

Osgoode prides itself on being a leader in diversity in law schools, particularly in admissions. Indeed, Osgoode has the largest BLSA chapter in Canada. However, more than being a leader in diversity in legal education, Osgoode needs to be anti-racist and anti-oppressive. This involves supporting anti-racism efforts. In March 2018, a deplorable incident of anti-Black racism was committed within the very walls of Osgoode during Black History Month. In response, the BLSA executive team at the time issued ten recommendations to the law school to combat anti-Black racism as it manifests within the law school. More than two years later, there is still much work to be done in carrying out these recommendations. Since the report's release, Osgoode has fulfilled only one recommendation, which called for a public statement from Osgoode. Unfortunately, Osgoode's fulfillment of this recommendation does little to achieve any real systemic change within the law school.

As a legal institution, Osgoode occupies a position of privilege. In light of the fact that legal institutions historically and currently enact oppression against marginalized folks, like the Black community, Osgoode has an especial responsibility to leverage its privilege in a meaningful way and to affirm the inherent value of Black life not only in interactions with police but in all aspects of life.

Osgoode cannot admit Black students to its school without adequately supporting them throughout their time in law school. BLSA members at Osgoode, current and prospective Black



law students across the country, and the broader Black community deserve a legal institution that both recognizes its history of oppression and actively works to make reparations and find solutions to the problems rooted in that history.

Accordingly, BLSA calls on Dean Condon and the Osgoode administration to:

1. **Denounce the acts of police violence both in Canada and abroad;**
2. **Fully implement the 2018 BLSA Recommendations;** and
3. **In recognition of the invaluable work being done by organizations to fight anti-Black racism, make a financial donation to a Canadian Black-led, community-led organization providing services to Black Canadians.**

Sincerely,

2020-2021 BLSA Executive Team