



Rhodes College

Dear Rhodes Community,

It has been an extraordinarily difficult few days, both in our city and across our country. Our hearts are broken for the communities in Monterey Park and Half Moon Bay in California, who are mourning the senseless murders of beloved family members and friends during what should have been a time of joyful celebration of the Lunar New Year. We know these tragedies have been especially difficult for members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, communities already reeling from a terrible increase in violence and acts of hate perpetrated against their members. We see you and we are here to support you.

At the same time, our beloved city is grappling with the tragic death of Tyre Nichols, and our hearts are broken for his friends and family, and for every resident of Memphis. While there is much we do not yet know, we do know that the loss of this young man is tragically the most recent example of a horrific history of violence toward and discrimination against Black Americans in this country. We simply must do better, and it is my fervent hope that every citizen in this country can come together to work toward a more just and compassionate nation free from violence, hatred, and discrimination. To our Black students, faculty, and staff – we know you are so very tired, and we are here to support you in any way that we possibly can. We know the community is anxiously awaiting the release of the videotape of this incident, but I want to assure you that we are already at work discussing how we can best support our community once it is released, thinking about spaces for support, education, and action. I also want to acknowledge the response to date of Memphis Police Chief Cerelyn Davis, District Attorney Steve Mulroy, and US Attorney Kevin Ritz to this incident, and I know they will share more information with our community as soon as they possibly can.

Interim Vice President for Student Life Alicia Golston will be sharing more information about resources for support, and Academic Affairs will be sharing some classroom resources for faculty. We will be back in touch shortly with more information about additional resources. As we mourn for the lives we have lost, let us support one another, treat each other with kindness and respect always, and work together to build a more just and compassionate nation.

Jennifer Collins
President

Rhodes College | 2000 North Parkway | Memphis, TN 38112
800.844.5969 | 901.843.3000

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2000 N. Parkway
Memphis, TN | 38112 United States

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