

Athabasca University Undergraduate Learners,

Yesterday, June 2nd, 2020 was observed across social media as #BlackoutTuesday. It was a day for us to sit, listen, and reflect upon the senseless death of George Floyd, at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer, and to understand the lives lost and the larger systemic issues the black community experiences on a daily basis. And while the executive team understands that we will never truly comprehend that lived experience, we are committed to listening, reflecting, and absorbing all we can on the Black Lives Matter movement and other issues that involve systemic discrimination and racism. The Athabasca University Students' Union executive team observed this occasion and dedicated space within ourselves to listen and educate ourselves in order to be an ally to all Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour.

Athabasca University is an open and online university that represents students from all across Canada and the world, including our fellow students from the United States. The Athabasca University Students' Union is against any form of discrimination, including the racism that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour face on a daily basis. While we watch the protests against systemic discrimination within the United States, there is much work that needs to be done in Canada in order to address systemic discrimination. The AU Students' Union will continue to listen and advocate on human rights issues faced by Athabasca University students, and society as a whole.

Social inclusion is an issue that our team is quite passionate about and one we wish to address over the upcoming year and beyond. Our President, Natasha Donahue, has undertaken steps to begin the process of Indigenization of AUSU to ensure a safe space for Indigenous students to collaborate. Our Vice President of Finance and Administration, Monique Durette, is working on position policy and advocacy initiatives to ensure students with disabilities are given equitable access to higher education. And finally, our Vice President External and Student Affairs, Stacey Hutchings, continues to advocate and work with the Provincial and Federal governments for improved support and the digital infrastructure needed to ensure all Canadians have access to post-secondary education no matter their location or socio-economic status.

The executive team stands with Black Lives Matter, and we encourage all AU students to [reach out](#) and let us know what we can do to support, understand, and address this critical issue.

In solidarity,



Natasha Donahue
President



Stacey Hutchings
VP External and Student Affairs



Monique Durette
VP Finance and Administration