

To: Frostburg State University Students  
From: Dr. Artie Lee Travis, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Date: Tuesday June 2, 2020  
RE: Letter Regarding Our Dual Crises

Dear Bobcat Student Community:

I have been struggling for the last few days to try to prepare a response to the Student Community regarding the state of things during the dual crises we find ourselves in. Since early March, the campus and this nation has had to contend with the painful realities of living and surviving in the midst of a global pandemic. Equally sobering is the tragic and unnecessary loss of black lives made vivid by recent events in Brunswick, Georgia; Louisville, Kentucky; and Minneapolis.

These recent events in the United States have further exacerbated and underscores the fragility of human life and, so much so, the overwhelming impact on Black lives. What has recently occurred in Minnesota and Florida reminds us of very clear and real racial inequities, as well as the abhorrent injustices often levied against African Americans.

Regardless of where these heart-breaking incidents occur, our student community here in Frostburg, and as well back at home across the state and the region, all people are affected. I know that many of us are understandably emotional and exhausted.

While we all feel the grief and anger of these tragedies, the emotional toll is especially taxing. Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd are the most recent names we have come to know, and there are others whose stories we have yet to hear.

The protests across the country – many peaceful, some sadly violent – reflect the anxiety, rage, and helplessness that many people feel so acutely at this moment. During these challenging times, please take care of yourself, your family and loved ones, and your colleagues.

As your Vice President for Student Affairs, I feel compelled to acknowledge the collective sadness, disappointment, pain, and suffering experienced by any member of our diverse Bobcat community. While our SGA President and other leaders and our Frostburg State University President have taken strong stands condemning the senseless acts of violence by only a few police officers and by those outside the peaceful organizers, I want to assure our Black community and the entire Bobcat community, that we will double our efforts through our Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to create a community that continues to celebrate diversity and to better understand the struggles that marginalized groups must go through to achieve understanding and respect.

I hope you will avail yourself of help, if needed. Our Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) team will be on call if they are needed (301-687-4234). I hope you will also share some words of comfort, if called upon to do so.

Follow the example led by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by making change via peaceful methods. I know I speak for my colleagues when I say that our genuine concern for each student in our community is one of our greatest strengths.

One day we should ALL be able to Breathe.

Peace be with each of you and please stay SAFE!