



A MESSAGE *from* PRESIDENT JAMES DANKO

Dear Butler Community,

In my [message commemorating Juneteenth](#) earlier this year, I shared that I was charging each of our divisional and college leaders with producing a list of actions to be undertaken across four key areas: education, organization, behavior, and procedure. The resulting plans for action contained significant, impactful initiatives that demonstrate a broad, university-wide commitment to these efforts. I'm encouraged by the passion and thoughtful consideration exhibited by this community as we work together to advance our founding values of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in today's context. I'd like to provide an update now on our investment of time and resources in these efforts and share several important announcements.

I am grateful for those who stepped out quickly and resolutely in leading this charge over the past few months. A number of important initiatives are already up and running including: [Butler Athletics' BUnited Initiative](#), JCA's social-justice themed [Signature Series](#), and the ONB Center's new [commitment to businesses owned by underrepresented groups](#). In August, our faculty and staff participated in a campus-wide anti-racism symposium including a keynote with Professor Ibram X. Kendi, who also delivered a session to Butler students later that week. Additionally, a number of Colleges, departments and divisions have initiated book clubs, hosted workshops or created discipline-specific resources for continued conversation and education on these important matters. We know that systemic, ongoing change will require expanding our organizational capacity in order to maintain focus on these efforts. To that end, we are making the following commitments:

Leadership and Accountability

All Butler students, faculty, staff, alumni, and board members share responsibility to act deliberately toward inclusion and equitable outcomes for the Butler community. Recognizing this distributed responsibility, leadership and accountability for DEI will be established beyond one individual or office. As such, we are elevating the search for the Vice President for Human Resources, a new Cabinet-level position, to ensure a robust and diverse candidate pool, and this individual will share accountability and oversight for our DEI efforts with Vice President for Student Affairs Frank E. Ross III and Provost Kate Morris.

This core team will provide leadership for a President's DEI Advisory Group, composed of members of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni. The Advisory Group will ensure coordination of DEI initiatives across the University, provide oversight in their respective areas, and advise the President on matters related to DEI.

Fill Vacancies in the Efroymsen Diversity Center

The Diversity's Center ongoing work to advance DEI at Butler is of critical importance to our students, as is the need to enhance and expand services,

advocacy and support for diverse student learners. I am pleased to announce that we will soon commence the search to fill two vacant staff positions in the Efroymsen Diversity Center.

Hub for Black Affairs and Community Engagement

As first announced at the anti-racism symposium and further described in the AT HOMEcoming virtual campus visit, Butler University is establishing a Hub for Black Affairs and Community Engagement in partnership with Professor of Political Science, Dr. Terri Jett, as Faculty Director. Further details will be shared in a separate email soon.

BUPD Advisory Group

I have commissioned an advisory group of students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members to evaluate the mission, structure, and role of the Butler University Police Department (BUPD) on campus. This group will recommend actions on how we might appropriately utilize BUPD on campus to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all community members, in particular, BIPOC students and LGBTQ+ students. The advisory group is currently working with a number of stakeholder groups to gain further insights.

DEI Innovation Fund

I am establishing a DEI Innovation Fund of \$200,000 for University-wide or unit-specific efforts that require additional financial resources. Once assembled, the President's DEI Advisory Group will provide guidance on the process for accessing and distributing those funds.

DEI in the Strategic Plan

Our efforts in DEI will be seen throughout each of our strategic priorities, but one in particular will create visibility, accountability, and sustained momentum for our efforts. The Priority calls on us to "Create an intentionally diverse, inclusive, and equitable learning and working environment." In support of this priority, we must solve the challenge of recruiting, retaining and cultivating students, faculty and staff from marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds and identities. We must foster a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff, and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives. And, we must seek to advance inclusion in all that we do, both inside and outside of the classroom.

You will hear further detail about our actionable plans, for this strategic priority and more, in late October.

Thank you for your continued support and collective effort as we strive to achieve meaningful and lasting progress towards our shared Butler mission and ideals. As always, **I welcome your thoughts.**

Sincerely,



James M. Danko
President, Butler University

BUTLER UNIVERSITY

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