

Jones Center News Digest, Issue 1

June 5, 2020

In Struggle and Solidarity

Statement of the Nathaniel R. Jones Center for Race, Gender, and Social Justice

Once again, our nation's history—a history borne of conquest, chattel slavery, and exclusion—is erupting into our explosive present. Covid-19, when it finally hit our shores, flagrantly exposed with undeniable clarity the deep structural inequalities created and perpetuated by state and federal policies that have purported to lift up and support all Americans, and the deeply embedded racial biases regularly employed to blame “others” for the failures of our own systems. And now, once again, recent police killings of several unarmed Black and Brown citizens like Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor—among so many others—have moved those who suffer most severely the consequences of systemic inequality to action. Once again, our nation is being called on to account for and reckon with our past and our present so that we can finally halt the seemingly endless cycle—a cycle that we've been caught in since our beginnings—of superficial and narrow commitments to “equality” that have led only to more entrenched racial, gender, sex, and class inequality – and as a result, to more despair-fueled anger and necessary struggle.

Our Center—named after the late Nathaniel R. Jones, an iconic civil rights leader and a federal court of appeals judge in the latter part of his career—is committed to helping our students and others to, as Judge Jones put it, “answer the call” – the call to face head-on the complicated and violent past and present that have brought us to this point. We pledge our continued support for and engagement in the struggle toward real equality and liberation—in whatever ways we can—and always in solidarity.

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The Nathaniel R. Jones Center is committed to participating in and furthering conversations and activities that seek to shine light on and work to eliminate the racism, sexism, heterosexism, and other inequalities so rampant in our local, national, and global communities. We believe sharing information that highlights the intersectional nature of historical and present-day inequities matters, and makes a difference in advancing our shared goals for social change.

History Matters

Whether in terms of mass protests and social unrest or a global pandemic that disproportionately impacts our most vulnerable communities, history is repeating itself.

Read: [The American Nightmare](#), by Ibram X. Kendi

Read: [Coronavirus Strikes Mirror Labor Actions During Spanish Flu, Great Depression](#), by Kim Kelly

Read: [How the Spanish Flu Almost Upended Women's Suffrage](#), by Alisha Haridasani Gupta

Community Matters

“Under the Blacklight: The Intersectional Failures that COVID Lays Bare” is a weekly webinar organized and hosted by the African American Policy Forum ([AAPF](#)) each Wednesday evening at 8:00 p.m. ET. In this live series, preeminent critical race feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw moderates a panel of front-line leaders and activists from around the country. Together, they examine and answer questions about how the Covid-19 pandemic is exacerbating and exposing some of our country's most serious inequalities. All episodes are recorded so if you miss a live episode, you can also watch on the [AAUP's YouTube](#) channel.

Watch/Listen: [Under the Blacklight](#)

Perspective Matters

Our latest UC Social Justice Blog post uncovers several relevant challenges related to the inequality of monetary bail, especially as prisons continue to see cases of Covid-19 rise.

Read: [Get Out of Jail Free, by Darceny Winston \('21\)](#)

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* offers some telling advice on adapting to the hardships being caused by the pandemic, including confronting the pressure to be productive.

Read: [Why You Should Ignore All That Coronavirus-Inspired Productivity Pressure, by Dr. Aisha S. Ahmad](#)

Jones Center Programming Updates

This fall, we are making plans to co-sponsor programming with CCM around its production of Zora Neale Hurston's "Spunk," as well as host the ABA's Traveling Exhibit on the Nineteenth Amendment. Stay tuned for more information.

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