

To our community,

The VOICE (Veterinarians as One Inclusive Community for Empowerment) Club shows our support for the Black Lives Matter movement. Helpful resources and upcoming events are provided in the attached document. Our mission is to promote awareness of and respect for the differences and intersectionalities among all individuals and communities in the field of veterinary medicine; to provide an environment that embraces diversity; and to promote student success (particularly of underrepresented students). In order to accomplish this, it is important that our community recognizes that **Black Lives Matter** and acknowledges their unique challenges. It is **imperative** that we all **educate ourselves** and continuously try to do better. We encourage dialogue, education, and empathy.

While police brutality and racism (and other injustices and prejudices) are not new to society, recent events have highlighted the power disparities between law enforcement and the black community. We want to recognize the needless deaths and harm caused by law enforcement, the failure of our criminal justice system, racism, and political polarization. We can empathize for hard-working, genuine law enforcement while holding them and the whole criminal justice system accountable to protect our community physically, mentally, and emotionally. We can sympathize and offer aid to those who have lost their homes or businesses and still support protesters. We can acknowledge where we are here and now, and still try to improve our understanding of our privileges, our community, and the roles of our privileges within our community.

Racism is a public health issue that involves each and every one of us. While we all have ever-changing levels of [implicit bias](#), it is important that we gain **awareness** of our biases, learn from one another, and **develop together**. It is important for each individual to put in the work for the betterment of the whole community; to learn about our internalized biases, to learn about the black community's history, and to diversify our knowledge and communication skills. While many of us cannot ever truly understand what it feels like to be black within our society, we, the VOICE club, are here to listen, offer support, and educate ourselves. **We stand in solidarity with you because all lives won't matter until black lives matter.**

If you are a person of color, have been affected by police brutality, violence, or prejudice, are a life-long learning ally, and/or simply want to learn more, we encourage you to utilize any of the attached resources. There are MANY ways to become more involved.

We recognize that one email cannot possibly address all of the complexities and differing ideas and opinions about police brutality, racism, or of our entire community. We hope you feel **supported and empowered** to speak to us and to one another. Regardless of where you are at, whether you have been raised to discuss social justice topics and bias or maybe you have never heard the definition of bias before, the VOICE Club is here to support everyone within our SVM community in whatever way is best for them. We encourage dialogue, education, and empathy. If you have any feedback, additional resources for us, or questions, please email VOICE at voiceofficers@office365.wisc.edu. Thank you for reading!

Sincerely,
The VOICE Executive Board

VOICE President: *Erika Kwong*
VOICE Vice President: *Rachel Taber*
VOICE Secretary: *Haley Lin*
VOICE Treasurer: *Adriana Sanchez*
VOICE Interprofessional Diversity Initiative Chair: *Brittney Moore*
Broad Spectrum President: *Emma Sweet*
Broad Spectrum Vice President: *Haley Lin*
Adviser: *Dr. Joan Jorgensen*

Find Support/Events:

- June 4 (6pm CDT): Virtual Townhall hosted by VOICE National (Dr. Lisa Greenhill) (register [here](#); more details found on Dr. Greenhill's FB post [here](#); more announcements TBD)
- June 7 (5 - 7pm CDT, pop-ins welcome): [Virtual Let's Talk hosted by the VOICE Chapter at UW SVM](#) on MS Teams where UW SVM students and faculty are welcome to discuss their personal responses/experiences related to current events (more announcements TBD)
- June 6 or 7th: virtual Safe Space Dialogue hosted by the Multicultural Veterinary Medical Association ([click the link](#) to register for 1 of the dates; space is limited)
- [PAWSS](#) (the Personal and Wellness Support Services): email a counselor to schedule a (virtual) meeting session
- Follow [National VOICE](#) on FB for continued support (UW VOICE Chapter FB page and Instagram coming soon!)

Learning:

- Anti-racism allyship [resources](#)
- Anti-racism [resources](#)
- [We all have implicit biases. So what can we do about it?](#) (Dushaw Hockett - TEDx)
- 13th (Ava DuVernay) on Netflix
- [Code Switch](#) (NPR podcast)

Donate:

- Watch [this video](#) without ad-block: 100% of the ad revenue will be donated to help offer protester bail funds, help pay for family funerals, and advocate the listed associations in the video
- [African American Round Table](#): Milwaukee-based coalition serving African Americans through policy change and civic engagement
- [Campaign Zero](#): seeks to end police brutality through improving community interactions, ensuring accountability of police, and affecting legislative changes
- [Black Visions Collective](#): Minnesota-based black, trans, and queer-led organization committed to dismantling systems of oppression and violence
- [Women for Political Change](#): holistically invests in the leadership and political power of young women, trans, and non-binary individuals throughout Minnesota