Statement of University of Detroit Mercy School of Law

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.” — Desmond Tutu

We, as faculty, administrators, and staff of University of Detroit Mercy Law School, recognize that the brutal killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor that have recently come to light are a part of our painful history of racial oppression from the start of slavery 400 years ago through to the present day. Specifically, we recognize:

- That we all have a responsibility to address the intolerable institutional racism that infects our country;
- That the institutional racism infecting our society at every level must be addressed;
- That this institutional racism is rooted in the sin of slavery;
- That our legal system, including Jim Crow Laws, redlining, our criminal laws, and our justice system as a whole, has reinforced racism and oppressed Black individuals throughout our history;
- That the devastating impact of Covid-19 on our Black and Brown communities in Southeast Michigan is directly linked to this history of racism and oppression; and
- That silence and inaction in the face of this institutional racism and the brutalities inflicted on Black individuals in our country cannot be tolerated.

We recognize that the impact of this systemic racism and brutality is not only felt outside of our Law School but is a reality that our students bring into the classroom and our Law School every day. We are therefore committed to taking steps to ensure an inclusive learning experience for all our students that recognizes this reality. Specifically, we commit to:

- Finding ways to incorporate into our courses an understanding of racial justice and the role race has played in our legal system;
- Engaging in training about cultural competency so that we can effectively teach all of our students;
- Investigating all aspects of our program of legal education – including admissions, financial aid, bar success, career placement, curriculum, and alumni relations – to determine where institutional racism has an impact and to taking steps to eradicate that impact;
- Prioritizing the hiring of persons of color;
- Prioritizing the recruitment of students of color; and
- Providing space for students to share their experiences and concerns about our learning environment, and actively listening to those concerns.
As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. reminded us, “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.” We all have a role to play in dismantling the system of racial oppression that has infected our society and we commit to taking affirmative steps towards its eradication both within our own walls and in the world beyond. By signing below, we pledge our support for these efforts.

Erin R. Archerd  
Associate Professor of Law  

Jacqueline P. Hand  
Professor of Law  

Catherine Archibald  
Associate Professor of Law  

Troy L. Harris  
Associate Professor of Law  

Julia Belian  
Associate Professor of Law  

Kate Harrison  
Director of Career Services and Outreach  

J. Richard Broughton  
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor of Law  

Charisse L. Heath  
Assistant Dean of Academic Success and Bar Preparation  

Margaret A. Costello  
Associate Professor of Law and Director, Veterans Law Clinic  

Julie A. Hein  
Director of Development  

Phyllis L. Crocker  
Dean and Professor of Law  

Grace C. Henning  
Communications Specialist  

Lawrence A. Dubin  
Emeritus Professor of Law  

Karen McDonald Henning  
Associate Professor of Law  

April L. Ellison  
Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Fund  

Jennifer Hostetler  
Reference and Government Documents Librarian  

Jelani Jefferson Exum  
Philip J. McElroy Professor of Law  

Megan Jennings  
Associate Dean for Student Affairs  

Megan Featherstone  
Associate Registrar  

Sunny Kerschenheiter  
Events Coordinator  

Sarah Garrison  
Director of Bar Preparation  

Shamaila S. Khan  
Assistant Dean and Registrar  

Jordan Hall  
Director of Student Affairs, Campus Equity, and Inclusion  

Kimberly Koscielniak  
Head of Public Services  

Cristina D. Lockwood  
Associate Professor of Law
Christina Loebach
Director of the Canadian & American Dual JD Program

Tanya Lundberg
Assistant Dean, Career Services and Outreach

Gary Maveal
Emeritus Professor of Law

Patrick Meyer
Associate Professor of Law and Library Director

Alex Meyers
Assistant Director of Admissions and Diversity

Andrew F. Moore
Professor of Law

Rebecca Simkins Nowak
Director, Clinical Operations and Outreach

Deborah Paruch
Professor of Law

Michelle L. Richards
Associate Professor of Law

Jessica Rouser
Assistant Director of Law Financial Aid

Jennifer Rumschlag
Associate Dean, Enrollment Management

Connor Salanger
Assistant Director of Career Services and Outreach

Nick Schroock
Associate Dean of Experiential Education and Associate Professor of Law

Leslie E. Scott
Assistant Professor of Law

Julie St. John
Assistant Professor of Comparative Research and Writing

Barbara Stockwell-Buslepp
Admission Specialist

Alexander Vernon
Assistant Professor and Director, Immigration Law Clinic

Cara Cunningham Warren
Associate Professor of Law

Stephen Wilks
Associate Professor of Law

Stephanie Winbigler
Director of Admissions