

Black Lives Matter

Ahmaud Arbery. Breonna Taylor. George Floyd. These three individuals are names on a long list of Black lives that have ended too soon. They will never have the opportunity to run through nature, save lives, or breathe fresh air again.

Black Lives Matter.

Black lives are the ones who are disproportionately impacted by unclean water and air. Black lives have less access to nutritional food. Black lives have a higher chance of living on toxic land. And Black lives are also the ones most directly affected by the consequences of a changing climate.

Sustainable solutions come from people from of all different backgrounds and experiences working together. We need all voices heard and every person to engage and tackle the global challenges we face. It can't happen when an entire group of people are justifiably afraid to vocalize their views on changing our world, let alone simply taking a walk outside for fear of losing their lives.

Our sustainability movement needs to do a better job of advancing inclusion. Dorceta E. Taylor, professor at the University of Michigan, studied the breakdown of diversity in the environmental field. [People of color represent 36% of the US population](#), but only make up 12.4% of staff in environmental non-profit organizations, 15.5% of environmental government agencies, and 12% of environmental foundations. If we truly believe in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals and creating a future that values all, we must do better.

That is why, in January 2020, UB Sustainability adopted a departmental [diversity and inclusion plan](#). It details how we will attract, hire, and retain employees that reflect the composition of our campus. We have set targets for our events that will lift up the talent and knowledge of diverse faculty and staff here at UB. We know that breaking the status quo of systemic racism requires constant self-improvement and awareness. UB Sustainability staff will take every opportunity to better themselves at diversity and inclusion trainings and workshops so that we are better equipped to talk about the injustices faced by people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disabilities. We also plan for this process to be transparent by posting a semester report on our website summarizing our inclusive initiatives.

We want to hear from our campus of how we can improve this important work. Please feel free to send us constructive ideas on programs and policies we can facilitate and implement to make sustainability an inclusive and diverse movement.

We are committed to creating an anti-racist workplace and university for our colleagues and students. Hatred and bigotry have no place in this work and in our world.

Ahmaud Arbery. Breonna Taylor. George Floyd. Their names and others must be said again. They are, and will forever be, the change agents the world needs for a long overdue awaking.

In solidarity,

The UB Sustainability Team