

# Declaration of Diversity

**In the course of our education and the pursuit of higher learning and enlightenment at the University of Rhode Island (URI), several events, including the brutal and senseless murder of George Floyd by a white man, have motivated students of all races: African-American/Black, Latino/Hispanic, Native American, White/European and others, to band together and organize to act deliberately with one voice to break the fortified structures of systemic racism at our flagship academic institution in Kingston, Rhode Island.** We reject a worldview of white supremacy that has reigned unchallenged for 128 years at the University of Rhode Island and with ONE voice speak this Declaration of Diversity to embrace racial equity and to renounce the evils of racism and renounce the evils of white supremacy deeply embedded in our systemically racist university.

**We as organized URI students,** hold these facts to be self-evident, that there is a deliberate and racist dehumanizing exclusion of highly qualified African-Americans/Blacks, Latinos/Hispanics and Native Americans from positions of senior leadership and other positions throughout the university, including: Administrative Staff, Deans, Department Chairs, Faculty, Functional Staff and Students. Our all-White leadership at the University of Rhode Island has not hired a single person descended from enslaved Africans, nor any other African-American or Indigenous person into a senior leadership position (President, Vice President, Provost, Vice Provost) since our university was founded in 1892 [\[click-URI Presidents\]](#). URI was founded four years before the U.S. Supreme Court's second most racist decision, *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), which legitimized Jim Crow racism as a legal "Separate but Equal" doctrine in U.S. constitutional law. But *Plessy* was still not as dehumanizing as the most racist U.S. Supreme Court decision *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857).

**We as organized URI students,** have learned from the 1857 *Dred Scott* opinion, that credible and erudite Chief Justice Roger Taney and SCOTUS explained their decision for denying *Dred Scott* his God-given right to live as a free dignified human being, with the following dehumanizing reasoning that was accepted as credible law: *a Negro, whose ancestors were imported into the U.S., and sold as slaves, whether enslaved or free, could not be an American citizen and therefore did not have standing to sue in federal court. Chief Justice Taney went on to explain that Negroes for more than a century before were regarded as beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race either in social or political relations, and so far inferior that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.*

**We as organized URI students,** unequivocally affirm that this racist and white supremacist worldview of Chief Justice Taney's erudite U.S. Supreme Court in 1857 and the 1896 "Separate but Equal" dehumanizing *Plessy* legal doctrine still lives on today in the indefensible and racist hiring practices of URI's erudite all-white leadership. An all-White leadership that has perpetually violated and contravened the 1964 Civil Rights Act's goal of equal employment opportunity and equal rights under the law. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin. That historic legislation was won ten years after landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), made possible by brilliant preeminent African-Americans at the NAACP with their attorney Thurgood Marshall, preeminent and distinguished Civil Rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Bernard LaFayette, Jesse Jackson, James Bevel, Fred Shuttlesworth, Diane Nash, John Lewis, and many other African-Americans at the NAACP, SCLC and SNCC. Shortly after graduating from law

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school and going to work for the NAACP, Marshall was a litigator in *Murray v. Pearson* (1936), in which the Maryland Court of Appeals held that the University of Maryland's Law School could no longer deny Blacks admission. Marshall's entire career was dedicated to excising the moral rot of racism from the very core of this country, and its encroachments on the lives of African-Americans. At the University of Virginia's commencement in 1978, Justice Marshall said, "**Where you see wrong or inequality or injustice, speak out, because this is your country. This is your democracy. Make it. Protect it. Pass it on.**" And this is exactly what we students are doing at URI to end racism.

**We as organized URI students**, embrace our sovereignty of reason and the observed evidence of our senses as sources of knowledge and truth about the abject dearth of diversity at the University of Rhode Island. We detect and reject all lies and persistent gaslighting from Dr. Kathy Collins about the abundance of diversity, equity and inclusion when plainly for all to see, no evidence has existed to support those lies for 128 years. We say enough to Dr. Kathy Collins' transparent lies, enough to President Dooley and Kathy Collins' hollow and contrived meaningless written statements, CED Strategic Plans, and insincere panel discussions about diversity & inclusion—evidently a forbidding joke at URI. We say enough to URI's administrators for the disrespect, indignity and dehumanization we suffer every day as African-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and marginalized students of color at the University of Rhode Island. We hold these truths to be self-evident that no university could possibly maintain an all-White senior leadership for 128 years without implicitly and deliberately colluding and conspiring to exclude African-Americans, Latinos and Native Americans from senior leadership positions. Furthermore, we are witness to a near complete absence of Americans descended from enslaved Africans in any significant positions with decision making power. **We have copied the Attorney General of Rhode Island to help end this wretched crime of racism against our dignity—this is the new Jim Crow, and we reject it.**

**We as organized URI students**, have observed Dr. Kathy Collins especially act with undue influence over Dr. David Dooley and she has grossly abused her power at this public university to corrupt the employment process to derail two specific erudite candidates: **Dr. Harry Alston, Jr.** [[click Alston resume](#)] an African-American and **Dr. Sylvia Spears** [[click Spears resume](#)] a Native American, who are both exemplary transformative diversity and race experts—they are the precise change agents that our structurally racist institution needs [[click Sean Rogers/CH email](#)] in order to end the dehumanizing 128-year reign of white supremacy and the subordination of African-Americans at the University of Rhode Island. The current Chief Diversity Officer Mary Grace, failed at Brown University and had to resign [[click Mary Grace](#)] for the same incompetence with friendliness she manifests at URI, does not have the knowledge, does not have the level of expertise, does not have the experience, does not have the African-American community contacts or credibility nor is she recognized as an authentic voice to transform diversity at **URI, which is at an abysmal state of de facto Jim Crow racism.** Mary Grace's incompetence was detailed in Professor Louis Fosu's letter directly to her and the URI leadership on February 13, 2020 [[click Fosu Letter](#)]. In her nearly two years Mary Grace has done absolutely nothing significant, except to parrot the words, views and maintain the failed systemic racist policies of her real boss and protector, Dr. Kathy Collins and other players in URI's leadership, such as Dr. Dooley. President Dooley seems to allow his personal affiliation or friendship with Mary Grace to cloud his judgement about her glaring incompetence, and her failed performance at Brown and now her evident failed performance at URI. Dr. Dooley, Kathy Collins and Mary Grace all remain ignorant or wantonly unresponsive to our needs for real structural diversity and social justice. If they were not ignorant or wantonly unresponsive to our diversity needs, then someone with intelligence, empathy or knowledge in our despondent Community, Equity and Diversity (CED) office or our URI leadership, would have sounded this alarm stating clearly that **128 years without an African-American, Latino or Native American in leadership is the ultimate manifestation of White Supremacy and the New Jim Crow** [[URI's appalling stats](#)].

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**We as organized URI students**, reject racism in all its forms: conscious, unconscious, cultural and spiritual. The dehumanizing hate, inequities and racism experienced at URI pierces and fractures our souls and our minds; and racism experienced at URI creates a debilitating and inescapable forced inferiority that may live with us for generations even when we win this fight for our dignity and humanity!!! **Equality** is our natural right endowed by our Creator. **Equality** is our right protected by the United States Constitution. **Equality** is our right protected by the United States Congress. Therefore, we the organized students at the University of Rhode Island pledge in this **Declaration for Diversity** to end the deep seated racist worldview of white supremacy passed down through generations from our racist **Founding Fathers** who denied us citizenship and valued us as Three-Fifths of human beings, as they exploited our genius and strength to prosper America's institutions that still deny us **Equal Rights under law**. We will end employment discrimination at URI by identifying and uprooting [#RootOutRacism](#) all forms of long-established structural racism; all forms of denial and silencing at the University of Rhode Island of systemic racism; and all forms of inequity supported by the government and state of Rhode Island. We need to heal, we need love, we need intellectuals such as Drs. Alston and Spears, we need authentic African-Americans and people of color with radical honesty, high intellect, knowledge and with the ability to uplift our souls and our hopes as students so we can continue a journey toward **Racial Equity**.

**We as organized URI students**, have been educated and acknowledge that all successful movements for change must be dignified, judicious, strategic, specific and nonviolent; and we must act ethically, morally and unapologetically without fear of reprisals. We also acknowledge that the succession of institutional leadership that is over a century old should not be dismissed for a mere transient cause. But this is a vital and enduring cause with a century-long train of lies, indignities, dehumanizing abuses, gaslighting, abject discrimination, deep rooted unaddressed systemic racism at URI, and an absence of all fundamental principles of fair play and respect for our dignity at this public flagship university in Rhode Island. URI's white faculty and administration's deep and abiding latent disdain for and fear of African-Americans, conflicts with their liberal and progressive self-image and professed beliefs of racial equality and tolerance. Open your eyes and recognize your own true identities by your deliberate and persistent racist policies that marginalize us.

**We as organized URI students**, from all races represented in this historic document see that now is the time for this change: African-American/Black, Latino/Hispanic, Native American, White/European and others, exercise our duty and constitutional right to petition our leaders and use our power, and to seek other powers—legal and legislative, to remove our corrupt, wantonly unresponsive, elitist and racist leadership at the University of Rhode Island for condoning and perpetuating institutional racism and normalizing dehumanizing racist inequities through their machinations of white supremacy. We students have signaled to our parents, grandparents and ancestors that we are taking a public stance as ONE, to embrace truth, to embrace justice, to embrace fair play and to embrace racial equity. **Therefore, in 2020, for the first time in URI's 128-year history, our over 70% White majority student body [URI's student statistics] voted for the first Black/Latino President and V.P. of the URI Student Senate with nearly a 68%-point margin.** Additionally, in 2020 we students organized to support the creation of the **URI Black Student Union**, to amplify the specific policy needs of Black students. Your old dying worldview of white supremacy is not ours – we reject it wholeheartedly and URI should take heed from us, your children and grandchildren—your racism is untenable, it injures all humanity, racism is the devil, racism is a sin, and we reject racism in all its insidious evil machinations.

**We, therefore, as organized URI students**, list the following complaints and demands in order that our nation understands the dehumanizing abuse, racism and academic tyranny we experience at the University of Rhode Island, and we petition the following leaders for redress: **(1) President, University of Rhode Island – Dr. David Dooley. (2) Chairman, Southern Christian Leadership Conference – Dr. Bernard Lafayette, Jr. (3) Founder, Rainbow PUSH Coalition – Rev. Jesse Jackson. (4) Congressional Black**

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Caucus Chairwoman – **Congresswoman Karen Bass** [#RootOutRacism](#). (5) President, NAACP – **Akosua Ali** (6) Director, NAACP – **Hilary Shelton**. (7) Founder, National Action Network – **Rev. Al Sharpton**. (8) Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives – **Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi**. (9) Chair, URI Africana Studies Department – **Dr. Vanessa Wynder Quainoo**. (10) House Majority Whip – **Congressman Jim Clyburn**. (11) Senior Counsel, Judiciary Committee – **Keenan Keller**. (12) Attorney General, State of Rhode Island – **Peter Neronha**. (13) Governor, State of Rhode Island – **Gina Raimondo**. (14) Mayor of Providence, Rhode Island – **Jorge Elorza**. U.S. Senators from RI: (15) **Senator Jack Reed** and (16) **Senator Sheldon Whitehouse**. U.S. Representatives from Rhode Island: (17) **Congressman Jim Langevin**, and (18) **Congressman David Cicilline**. (19) Rhode Island Legislative Black and Latino Caucus Chair, **Jean Phillippe Barros**. **To prove this, we submit our facts to a candid world:**

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## *List of Complaints and Demands*

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- 1) **128 years** of de facto Jim Crow racism on campus is unacceptable and untenable at the University of Rhode Island in 2020. Racism experienced by students at URI pierces and fractures our souls and our minds; and racism experienced at URI creates a debilitating and inescapable forced inferiority that may live with us for generations even when we win this fight for our dignity and humanity. We understand and accept that you are white men and white women who deep within believe white skin is superior, but it is in fact not superior. Our enlightened generation is not willing to suffer in silence as did our parents. We unequivocally reject [128 years of white supremacy](#) manifested by the fact that you have not hired African-Americans with an ancestry to slavery in URI's leadership. We reject your hiring of incompetent people of color in essential diversity positions to protect your supreme White control over authentic transformative change for diversity. Those you hire support your pervasive racist policies, as if they do not have brains and as if they have not been educated to analyze and think for themselves and, as if they have no tongues and voices to mouth truth to power. We reject Mary Grace and Mr. Rogers, we reject Kathy Collins, and we reject all their handpicked facilitators of systemic racism in the CED office, Multicultural Center, Faculty Senate, President Dooley's Diversity Committee and Search Committees; we reject all those machinations of racism and reject white supremacy wholeheartedly with every breath we have, because racism is evil and racism kills the human spirit, racism wrecks our souls—it is a sin suffered in silence and we the organized students of URI are taking the first steps to end this generational pain and the silent suffering that our parents and ancestors passed on to us. **WE WILL NOT BE SILENT!!!**
- 2) **African-American URI President:** Current recruitment firm for senior leadership must change immediately. Current recruiting firm is using the same racist procedures and embedded discriminatory practices that have produced the same all-White leadership at URI for 128 years. One cannot keep doing the same thing and expect a different result. **Some Black, White and Latino students shall join in another class action lawsuit if the next URI President is not an African-American with an ancestry to slavery.** And, if anyone reading this asks why the **next president of URI must be an African-American** but has never questioned why URI has had 128-years of white presidents then you must be a racist. We demand that African-American Presidents from other universities are immediately included in this search process for President Dooley's replacement [\[click-128-years of URI Presidents\]](#). We request a Congressional hearing from Congressional Black Caucus Chair Representative Karen Bass [#RootOutRacism](#). **WE ARE DONE WITH RACISM!!!**



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- 3) **Board of Trustees and Search Committees for the President and URI leadership.** All current search committees that have produced the same URI senior leaders for 128 years without a single African-American, Latino, Native American or African-American with an ancestry to slavery must be **disbanded with immediate effect**. These URI search committees are deliberate systems to maintain structural racism for another 128 years of White supreme leadership at URI, this is self-evident by our abject existence without diversity on our URI campus and no African-Americans in leadership. **All Search Leadership Committees must include:** Africana Studies Department Professor Dr. Vanessa Wynder Quainoo, African-American students and students from the Black Student Union and the leaders in the Africana Studies Department--because it is us who need diversity, not the white people clogging search committees. Black and Latino faculty must be included because they are experts in African-American history, leadership, diversity, institutional and structural racism, Black women's empowerment, civil rights, constitutional law, rights and policy, and social justice advocacy for marginalized people. They will form the foundation and blueprint for new search committees for all leadership positions—so as to break the deep-rooted foundations of structural and systemic racism and URI's 128-year worldview of white supremacy. **George Floyd's death cannot be in vain.** The current Board of Trustees and current URI leadership do not have the credibility to produce an African-American candidate who should be our next URI President. And, if anyone asks why the next president of URI must be an African-American, but has not asked why there have been 128 years of white URI presidents, then your question is an acknowledgement that you are a racist [\[click-URI Leadership\]](#).
- 4) **Introductory 101-level courses** on racism/diversity/pluralism: Make it mandatory for all incoming first year students to take at least one Africana Studies course as a general education requirement. Make it mandatory to teach all incoming first-year students in their first semester the importance of diversity & inclusion, and courses on racism and systemic racism. The U.S. Constitution and Rights, Sociology and other classes should be listed with Africana Department codes and cross-listed to various departments (not the other way around). For example, our Professor Fosu teaches constitutional law and the supreme court from a critical race theory perspective, just as he was educated and mentored at Georgetown Law by preeminent constitutional law professor Charles Lawrence III, who is also our nation's foremost critical race theory scholar. Professor Fosu's classes should not only benefit the Political Science or Honors Department but should be cross listed with an Africana Department code. **Professor Dr. Vanessa Wynder Quainoo should be provided funds to reach out to the best African-American, Latino, Native American minds on campus and off campus to create new general courses so every student graduates with a course from the Africana Department—students will learn economics, ethics, equity, humanity, international affairs, law, love, music, policy, advocacy and social justice from the very best faculty; and Dr. Quainoo needs full-time permanent administrative staff like every other important URI department.** Lessons on how to be culturally intelligent about race and how to become conscientious participants in our society—that is all we ask.
- 5) **Africana Studies Department:** Africana Department must have a much higher level of funding for colloquiums, conferences on Racism in America, lecture series and debates, discussions and talks with our venerated artists, intellectuals, leaders, scholars, scientists and thinkers who continue to make America, Africa, the Caribbean, Europe and the whole world shine brighter with heightened awareness of love, decency, ethics and humanity.
- 6) **Africana Studies Department:** Africana Department needs a respectable space immediately in proximity to classrooms and offices—**a floor in Green Hall will be the best and appropriate place for the Africana Department**—because it was built by our forced unrewarded labor starting in 1937.

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That was then, now in the *New Jim Crow* era, prisoners who are mainly people of color are inexcusably building furniture for URI's dormitories and paid less than \$3 per day [in this, our liberal and Democratic Providence Plantations] (Schiff, Pam. "Correctional Industries prepares inmates for jobs." Cranston Herald, December 4, 2014). Venerable African-Americans have made America the beacon of justice and equality all over the world. We sit in integrated classrooms as Black and White students because of Martin Luther King, Autherine Lucy, James Bevel, Jesse Jackson, Rosa Parks, Thurgood Marshall, Bernard LaFayette and John Lewis, and many other African-Americans at the NAACP, SCLC and SNCC. They fought for the Civil Rights Act that ended legal discrimination in all forms. Every marginalized group and especially White women made gains in academia, sports and the workplace because of African-Americans fighting for civil rights. African-Americans have been on the forefront of all criminal and social justice legislation to improve lives of marginalized groups. This nation has benefited from the wisdom, knowledge and courage of African-American academics, inventors, scientists, writers, lawyers, scholars, politicians, leaders, artists and the back-breaking labor of shackled and enslaved men, women and children, to build our country. Therefore, it is incomprehensible that the Africana Studies Department at URI is not prioritized as being of utmost importance. Instead Africana Studies is forced to go through a degrading process of pleading for approval as a department, after George Floyd's death changed the cadence and increased the volume for Black Lives Matter. Indeed, that needs to change. There is a deep debt of humanity and justice owed to African-Americans. Therefore, it was revolting to witness the Africana Studies Department being mandated to seek signatures and beg to become a full department as Dean Jen Riley, a feminist who benefited from Martin Luther King's 1964 Civil Rights Act, sat together with Provost Donald DeHayes and the Faculty Senate with its all-White Executive Committee as they deliberately permitted this undignified and humiliating process, which was insulting, demeaning and dehumanizing. **African-Americans do not have to beg for dignity, respect and recognition anywhere, WE made and make America better, kinder and greater every day!!!**

- 7) **Africana Studies Department:** Requires a higher level of funding and we demand to review their full budget. The Africana Studies Department must be marketed and promoted on at least the same level as other important programs. The domination and exploitation of African-descended people (and the resulting resistance) is so central to world history, politics, economics, and the American story that for students to graduate with a four year degree with no understanding of this history is to send URI students into the world unprepared; and to risk an embarrassing and dangerous level of incomprehension as recently happened when the Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives, Nicholas Mattiello publicly doubted the historical fact that slavery existed in Rhode Island, which had more slaves per capita than any other New England state.
- 8) **Africana Studies Department:** Africana Studies Department courses should be scheduled throughout the day, not only at later times in the afternoon when students are not available.
- 9) **All White Faculty:** You cannot be permitted to be conscious or unconscious racists, harm us with racism, support systemic racism with your silence, and then make money researching, discussing, recommending ambiguous ineffective solutions, and teaching us courses about your racist system of harm—this is incredulous, while you have done nothing specific or significant at URI to end racism as you build your careers at conferences and other fora presenting irrelevant papers. All white professors who are exploiting race and diversity in political science and other departments, by seeking research grants, creating conversations about racism, diversity initiatives, and teaching courses about racism, heading diversity and inclusion committees, while silently and implicitly benefiting from racism at URI, should immediately STOP your hypocrisy and exploitation. STOP teaching all those courses and discussions on race and diversity because you only privilege yourselves and never speak up with Truth about deplorable racism at URI. STOP exploiting our suffering because you DO NOT

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want to end racism! **The Head of the Africana Department Professor Dr. Vanessa Wynder Quainoo** shall be the point person (with her department's faculty) to approve QUALIFIED instructors and professors to teach these courses about racism and diversity, and the Africana department shall screen race and diversity experts and knowledgeable candidates for all department diversity and Presidential committees AND Dr. Quainoo needs full time staff to help her with these tasks—just as other important departments are provided a staff. **This is how endemic racism ends.**

**\*\*We students will create a White-List** of all those white professors who define and list themselves as diversity initiative conveners, race experts and researchers while they are silent and benefit from white supremacy and racism at URI, self-evident by the fact that no African-American with an ancestry to slavery and no Latino has been hired to a senior leadership position since 1892—and NOT ONE WHITE FACULTY member has expressed a problem with that fact, and the glaring fact that there are NO BLACK FACULTY members in the Criminal Justice Department and only a couple at the Harrington School. You white professors do not need research to find out about systemic racism at URI—you are part and parcel of the creation and maintenance of systemic racism at URI through your self-serving policies, unapologetic excuses, discriminatory behavior and your hegemonic culture of impunity. You should be ashamed of yourselves and we will help end this metastasized disease of racism. Your panel discussions about diversity and ethics should be our panel discussions about diversity and ethics, and we pick who should be on these panels.

- 10) **Black National Greek Fraternities:** While the Greek Life system at the University of Rhode Island has thrived for much of the school's history, Black and Latino/Hispanic students routinely struggle to form their own multicultural Greek organizations, especially Alpha Kappa Alpha (founded 1908), Alpha Phi Alpha (founded 1906) and Delta Sigma Theta (founded 1913). There have been several efforts in recent years by the Greek Life professional staff to bring multicultural Greek organizations to campus, but they have been unable to find real success establishing a local chapter. The Greek community continues to fail to recruit Black and Latino/Hispanic students as it struggles to overcome its own problems with racism and white supremacy, and the URI senior leadership led by President David Dooley and Dr. Kathy Collins is incapable of helping to solve these issues. We need a diverse and well-educated senior administration that is willing and able to fund and support Greek Life in becoming more diverse and equitable for all students.
- 11) **Breaking structurally racist barriers:** Some of us will testify as witnesses on behalf of Dr. Alston and Dr. Spears in any civil or criminal proceeding as credible witnesses about our factual abject racist existence here at URI—we are witnesses and have ample evidence of manipulations of systemic and structural racism at URI. This is the new Jim Crow, and Professor Louis Fosu who is our faculty adviser and the Executive Director of the Diversity Think Tank (a Rhode Island nonprofit: <http://diversitythinktank.org/>) has informed us that he will join and help with class action lawsuits and civil rights lawsuits in the tradition of Brown v Board of Education to break this 128-year old fortified structure of systemic racism at URI. He will testify if asked by plaintiffs or the Attorney General's office about details provided by search committee members and others in leadership who were privy to the illegal and unethical collusion that occurred to keep Mary Grace in office, and knowing that Mary Grace failed at Brown University and had to resign [[Mary Grace steps down](#)]. Why is Mary Grace still here after her one-year term as interim CDO expired in January of 2020, and when she has manifestly failed and has done absolutely nothing significant to advance diversity at URI? Most of those details are found in this letter [[click Fosu-Mary Grace Letter](#)]. Prof. Fosu and two other faculty members who are privy to URI's civil rights violations and abuse of two erudite diversity job candidates—Dr. Harry Alston and Dr. Sylvia Spears (an African-American and Native American)—were all offered new jobs and Prof. Fosu is the only one who turned down his job offer as an Interim Director at the Alan Shawn Feinstein College of Education and Professional Studies

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[Fosu to Rolle email]. Professor Fosu's two colleagues in URI's faculty accepted their new positions, and they spoke no more of what they witnessed about URI's racism and employment violations of Dr. Harry Alston. This is how systemic racism is maintained by co-opting and incentivizing silence, and in so doing corrupting members of our subordinated Black community who willingly seek acceptance of our URI leadership by denying racism and/or administering the very racist policies that have promoted and protected white supremacy for 128 years at URI. Ethical conduct and deliberate action by faculty and administrators to fight racism and inequality is an essential ingredient and disinfectant to end systemic racism—not empty words of equal employment opportunity. It will be the Attorney General's job with outside investigators to interrogate why Dr. Dooley chose a plainly incompetent person, Mary Grace, over the likes of Alston and Spears in an important critical diversity position—when she has a proven record of failures—first at Brown University [click MG steps down], and now at URI [click MaryG letter]. By any equitable standards of merit and job performance, the appointment of Mary Grace is unacceptable and must be rescinded immediately!!!

12) **Breaking structurally racist barriers:** We will not accept unqualified people to work in diversity and cultural matters at URI, especially when they are 'yes men' and 'yes women' who continue to support systemic racism and the conscious and unconscious white supremacist policies established by URI's all-White leadership. Our URI leadership must have heard about the Civil Rights movement and those who led the civil rights movement then and now. **All those significant civil rights leaders are AFRICAN-AMERICANS with an ancestry to slavery—in the same tradition of thinkers and intellectuals like Dr. Harry Alston.** URI can no longer appoint incompetent administrators such as Mary Grace to head diversity issues when they do not act with ethics and independence. Not just any person who happens to be non-white can perform the critical duties of a diversity chief—just any person of color will not do! We need intellectuals, thinkers, complex problem solvers who have humility and love students and work well with students, we need ethical administrators with integrity, high intellect and knowledge about civil rights and who listen actively and work courageously for change like Dr. Harry Alston and Dr. Sylvia Spears, and we will make sure they are both on campus.

13) **Center for Nonviolence & Peace Studies** at University of Rhode Island, founded by **Dr. Bernard Lafayette, Jr.**, was based on the work of **Dr. Martin Luther King** and other African-Americans to free themselves from a racist system committed to robbing them of their labor, their lives, their civil rights and their dignity. **We demand that the next director of the Center for Nonviolence & Peace Studies be an African American with lineage to slavery.** Until "justice rolls down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream," the stewardship of this important, international work should be in the hands of someone who is personally vested in continuing Dr. King's emancipatory project, and has shown a demonstrated real world commitment to achieving equity.

In this important position, we want a leader who is a professor and/or civil rights advocate, versed not only in the theory of nonviolence, but someone with a record of nonviolently opposing racism, someone whose conscience would not allow them to silently witness racism on campus, and the gross overrepresentation and mass incarceration of Black, Brown and Indigenous people in the state of Rhode Island, (<https://www.vera.org/downloads/pdfdownloads/state-incarceration-trends-rhode-island.pdf>) while espousing a commitment to Dr. King and his dream. We want leadership that embraces Dr. King, the Civil Rights Movement and African-American civil rights leaders as role models to imitate and emulate. We want someone with the courage to speak truth, with a history of activism, advocacy, and achieving results.

It is destructive for anyone to wear the mantle of leadership in matters rooted in African American history and the struggles of Black, Brown or Indigenous people, without demonstrating a strong commitment to opposing racial injustice on campus and in the broader society. In the midst of our suffering and the violation of our rights here at URI, in prisons, and at the hands of police, we demand



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leadership that is in tune with our needs and engaged. As did Dr. King, we welcome the solidarity, assistance and support of European American friends who are truly committed to democracy and justice. Those Americans with lineage to Europe who stand with us and courageously join us in questioning the pre-assigned roles of our racist past, are our brothers and sisters. Only an all-white, racist administration would even think of extending their racist control to one of the few places on campus with a nominal mission of collaborating with organizations engaged in nonviolence work at local, national and global levels. Exactly one year before he was killed, Dr. King spoke of, "...the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today: my own government." Almost 60 years later on the domestic front, White Americans continue to be the most [violent and racists](#) in America.

- 14) **Criminal Justice Department** at URI has been dubbed the most racist department by many African-American/Black and Latino/Hispanic students. It is unacceptable that URI has the audacity to maintain an all-white racist department when Blacks are murdered continuously by white police and when Blacks are victims of police brutality, wrongful convictions, and mass incarceration. The truth is that racist criminal justice policy in America, has been effectively transformed by erudite African-American leaders such as [Nkechi Taifa](#), [Hilary Shelton](#) with many others at the [NAACP](#) and several Black and Latino groups at Nkechi Taifa's [Justice Roundtable](#)—a coalition Professor Kwame Fosu was part of and worked closely with in Washington, D.C. We ask that former Chair/Director, Jill Doerner and Barbara Costello apologize to us students and faculty for maintaining a department with all-white professors. Overwhelmingly, Black students have expressed love for the current Interim Director, Christine Zozula, who was described by one Black student as, "...*she is great and actually cares about students of color... and helping us all the way through graduation ... she's the bomb!*" Although Professor Christine Zozula is well loved by us Black students, she must join in the apology because URI's Criminal Justice Department still remains systemically and structurally racist. We also know that Professor Louis Kwame Fosu was made an offer to teach in the CJ department after George Floyd was murdered, but Prof. Fosu turned it down because he explained to us that "*the fundamental issues of systemic racism have not been addressed in the staff or criminal justice curriculum at URI ... my appointment or one Black man in the Criminal Justice Department is not the answer to resolving a century of deep-seated pervasive racism and systemic bigotry, which is protected and swathed in the credibility of liberal, erudite, soft spoken white men and women who have stamps of glowing credibility emanating from two, three or four degrees after each of their names.*"

Furthermore, we students ask that Jill Doerner must be removed from the Honors Department. There are African-American and Latino professors who can take her place in the Honors Department—this is unjust! We as an academic institution cannot reward a culture of systemic racism at URI with a new position in the Honors Department, which even though not deliberate is perceived as reserved for white faculty and students. If a department Chair/Director, such as Jill Doerner, hires only White instructors [[click: URI Crim J Dept](#)] to teach Criminal Justice, when there is an abundance of Black scholars in Criminal Justice available in America and in Rhode Island – why have no White faculty or administrators said a single word about the all-white Criminal Justice Department until Professor Lou Kwame Fosu walked on campus and questioned URI publicly in this letter [[click: read page 4](#)]. Students will protest Jill Doerner and the Honors Department if there is no apology and if she is not removed from the Department. Acknowledging wrongdoing and damage from systemic racism is the first step to healing and reconciliation from abject racism on URI's campus and in America.

- 15) **Demographics** should be reflected in every academic department for advising roles at the University. Students of color do not feel the support from the advising community because it is hard to find a mentor that looks like you, and able to relate to your experience and help elevate your vision for life.
- 16) **Demographics**: We demand that URI provide current comprehensive diversity, equity and inclusion data annually to the URI community and stakeholders. This data should be published in a way that is

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clear and easily accessible. As an example, here are data as provided by Dr. Harry Alston during his well-received 2019 URI community presentation [[URI's appalling statistics](#)].

- 17) **Diverse Faculty Recruitment:** Create a committee headed by a Director for Diverse Faculty Recruitment to recruit and retain African-American and Latino professors, and this committee should include Professors who intimately understand the deep complexities of diversity and the nuances of racism, and are intellectuals and experts on African-American history, art, Black women's empowerment, leadership, business organization, civil rights, diversity and inclusion, constitutional law and policy--those who have dedicated their lives to educate, write, advocate for and demand change successfully in the real world for African-Americans and marginalized people. We were expecting Dr. Harry Alston to come on board but we observed and learned that Mary Grace and others were intimidated by the real change he would certainly bring to URI, and with the help of Kathy Collins and the URI leadership killed Dr. Harry Alston's candidacy and students will take the necessary steps to resolve this and restore the dignity of Dr. Harry Alston. We will not allow African-Americans to be lynched on our campus anymore—that ended with the cold-blooded murder of George Floyd by a white man and we are ready for this fight. The Attorney General is copied to investigate the collusion that occurred between members of faculty, search committees and senior administrators to lynch Dr. Harry Alston and other acts of discrimination and racism.
- 18) **Diversify counseling center** and retain more African-Americans, Latinos as professional counselors at the counseling center, so they can understand our problems and we can feel comfortable approaching them. How many White people reading this document have a Black therapist? Maybe, you understand our issues better now—learn to empathize and treat us the same way you treat yourselves and your children—[we need counselors who understand our trauma](#).
- 19) **Diversity Committee:** ALL Diversity Committees including the Board of Trustees must include faculty and students of color and members of the Black Student Union and other organizations advocating for racial equity on campus. Students and faculty will be selected by an open call and invitation to all, for our best who are confident racial equity activists and motivated to step forward—not those who are handpicked and controlled by the URI administration and leadership. That is how to have comprehensive and effective diversity policy change – by listening to students and assenting to our reasonable thoughtful demands for racial equity.

You cannot produce any authentic policy at this time for effective policy change when you maintained this racist system for so long. **James Madison said, “No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity”** – Black racial equity activist students and faculty must be included in ALL committees because you cannot be trusted to suddenly end the white supremacy that you have created, maintained and privileged yourselves with for 128 years.
- 20) **Diversity Committee: Breaking structurally racist barriers.** Why do white faculty and white deans and associate white deans sit on every diversity committee and search committee, when for decades they have collected paychecks paid with our money, yet no one has uttered one word about abject systemic racism at URI? But one professor, Louis Kwame Fosu, with the help of others in the background, spoke up the moment he recognized the racial inequality. However, Professor Fosu has been systematically blocked from every single Diversity and Search Committee and even removed from **FSAAD** by obsequious Black faculty who are protectors and apologists for URI's racist policies (**Faculty Staff of African Ancestry or Descent--FSAAD**). We demand that URI immediately remove all discriminatory and racist barriers deliberately set by URI's leadership to block Professor Louis Fosu's participation to change racist policy at URI. He is the foremost advocate for diversity at URI, a critical race theory expert and prolific advocate for change with a successful track record

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and he should not be blocked from any diversity or search committees. Prof. Fosu sent this letter to URI's leadership after they colluded to derail a highly qualified African-American candidate [[click MaryG letter](#)]. We need ethical, fearless, intelligent and powerful professors fighting this colossal force of 128 years of white supremacy at URI.

- 21) **Diversity Committees:** Diversity Committees at URI are overwhelmingly stacked with WHITE people who have little or no expertise in race/diversity policy or advocacy for African-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans and are therefore ill-suited for service on these committees, becoming distractions from clear thinking and comprehensive planning towards racial equity. Despite 'restructuring' of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion function and public declarations that increasing diversity is a top priority, this lack of expertise results in the perpetuation of critical failures in diversity hiring and weak strategic planning. Even when the majority of diversity committee members have PhDs and other credentials – they have no relevant and specific experience addressing or passionately confronting racist discriminatory practices and advocating for racial equity in the United States. If they did have diversity expertise, URI would not be among the most structurally racist universities in America today and someone on those diversity committees would have addressed these very issues we students are addressing right now. For full details of racism at URI, go to: <http://diversitythinktank.org/>
- 22) **Diversity Committees:** Remove committee members who had the audacity to propose an initiative called "*Diversity and Violence*", which Professor Louis Kwame Fosu heard announced during his [April 30, 2020 College of Arts & Sciences faculty meeting](#), and Prof. Fosu immediately spoke up and shot the initiative down because [it is white students who are the most violent on campuses](#)—not us. Prof. Fosu has been consistently denied a seat on all Diversity Committees because he stands up against URI racist policies wherever he sees them. The URI's leadership, for the most part, appoints our Black/Latino faculty who are silent or condone these egregious racist policies we are discussing.
- 23) **Diversity: Chief Diversity Officer must be at the Vice President level** and rank and called the VP for Diversity. URI is deliberately keeping the CDO position below a VP level to ensure that a white person in leadership is the de facto CDO, and at URI it is a White woman called **Kathy Collins**. This is another manifestation of how systemic racist policies at URI are maintained through white supremacy. Therefore, any CDO who would challenge the white power structure for real change would be maligned and diplomatically removed and described as an "angry person who is not a good fit"—which is how soft-spoken White people tell people of color "*you are not like us and you are not obeying us...we do not want change*". URI cannot pay lip service to diversity while keeping the CDO at a rank that can be controlled by a manipulative or racially insensitive Vice President in order to contravene diversity. The role of CDO does not fit neatly into routine academic functions. By definition, its critique must span the complexity of the entire institution. In "The Emergence of the Chief Diversity Officer Role in Higher Education" (a report by global organizational consultants Russell Reynolds Associates) the effective CDO must have the following in place for success: Empowered within the organizational structure reporting directly to the President or Provost; Have clearly articulated a mandate for change; and have a supporting institutional view that diversity is not a compliance exercise. Let's be clear, The CDO position has to be at a level next to the President and that is a Vice President of Diversity—an agent for change.
- 24) **Diversity: Offer the position** of *VP for Diversity* or *Director of Diverse Faculty Recruitment and Retention* to **Dr. Sylvia Spears, an excellent candidate** (Native-American) for either of these jobs, who was systematically derailed by Kathy Collins and the all-white URI leadership team [[click Spears resume](#)]. As he observed and monitored URI's leadership during the CDO candidacy forums, Professor Louis Fosu foretold what would happen to Dr. Sylvia Spear's candidacy on page 10 [[read](#)

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[page 10-13](#)]. Dr. Spears was brilliant, impressive and excellent in every possible way and towered over any other candidate including our failed interim CDO Mary Grace. Dr Sylvia Spears had a command on diversity and race and a vision for URI and spoke and presented as a seasoned expert, every independent faculty member including a Vice Provost who attended said, “*Dr. Spears was the best candidate but you know how these things go around here...Kathy Collins will get who she wants and you know who that will be...*”. URI’s leadership will stay within their comfort zone because they don’t really want authentic and genuine change at URI; and the leadership still continued to collude, after receiving Dr. Lou Fosu’s letter, and appointed Mary Grace as an “emergency appointment” with no time limit, [citing COVID](#). This is a waste of taxpayer funds because **URI’s leadership is conducting fake candidacy forums when they already know who they will appoint and control**. Any African-American who has a clear command and knowledge of race, diversity and equity is pushed aside. Kathy Collins needs to go; she doesn’t even allow Dr. Dooley to answer his own questions posed by our elected student representatives at meetings and forums—it gets very annoying.

- 25) **Diversity: Offer the position** of *Director of Diverse Faculty Recruitment and Retention or VP for Diversity* (currently called Chief Diversity Officer) to **Dr. Harry Alston, Jr. an outstanding candidate** (African-American) and most impressively qualified candidate to emerge during the 2019 search process for the job of [Director of Diverse Faculty Recruitment and Retention](#). Dr. Alston was so impressive that many Black Faculty including Sean Rogers and Christopher Hunter (CH) expressed passionately that Dr. Harry Alston could also be an excellent Chief Diversity Officer (Mary Grace’s current position), and CH on behalf of FSAAD, sent a letter to Mary Grace selecting Dr. Alston for the job [\[click Alston resume\]](#). Dr. Harry Alston is an exceptional intellectual African-American candidate, who had outstanding interview presentations at URI and has extensive civil rights networks. Therefore, he was overwhelmingly and strongly recommended for the job of Director of Diverse Faculty Recruitment and Retention by FSAAD (*the URI Faculty & Staff of African-American Decent org. lead by Dr. Christopher Hunter*). Despite all of these stellar qualifications, his candidacy was systematically derailed by Mary Grace with the support of Kathy Collins and URI leadership. This is completely disrespectful to the African-American community, when the whole of FSAAD sent a letter through their leader, Dr. CH, endorsing Dr. Alston as our next diversity leader. CH, Louis Fosu and many Black faculty along with Sean Rogers who was on the Search Committee were scrutinizing all candidates very closely to be sure to select the best candidate—because they wanted the highest caliber person to help with the colossal diversity problem at URI. With Dr. Harry Alston the clear choice, the next step was that [CH asked Lou Kwame Fosu to help draft a letter for FSAAD](#) to Mary Grace/URI administrators stating that Dr. Harry Alston was FSAAD’s candidate of choice. This link below is to a snippet of email exchanges between CH asking Prof. Fosu to help draft FSAAD’s recommendation for Dr. Alston to Mary Grace. Several emails between Rogers, CH and others out of URI that prove Dr. Alston the best candidate was deliberately derailed, will be provided to the Attorney General and civil attorneys to protect Dr. Alston’s credibility, dignity and rights to equal employment opportunities at URI [\[Mr. Rogers, H, S, F email\]](#) and [\[click CH email\]](#).

[Due to his excellent interview and outstanding presentation](#), Dr. Alston was thus chosen by the FSAAD group but Rogers reported at an FSAAD meeting that Mary Grace seemed threatened by Dr. Alston, and a whispering campaign had already begun to malign Alston amongst the URI leadership and on the Selection Committee who openly expressed that they were suspicious of Dr. Alston because he seemed flawless, and he answered all his questions “too perfectly” as one member put it, and Dr. Alston was “knowledgeable about everything he was asked and that was unusual”. According to Sean Rogers, he explained that some search committee members worried aloud whether Mary Grace would be able to work with Harry Alston because he was viewed as high powered with superior skills and he could easily be the CDO himself—so why did he want this job, and he may target the CDO job soon after he was hired—because Mary Grace’s interim CDO term expired in two months



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(but she wanted to stay -- Kathy Collins & Pres. Dooley soon fixed that for Mary Grace). Prof. Fosu documented all the unethical discriminatory details in a letter sent to Mary Grace and President Dooley on February 13, 2020. Furthermore, Sean Rogers' conversations detailed discrimination and bigotry during the URI Alston interview process, which Sean Rogers discussed at FSAAD meetings and at lunches at Mama Phoenix Café with Professors Fosu and H; those details are on *page 7 of the February 13th letter* [[click: read pages 7-9](#)]. But, Sean Rogers remained silent and did not speak up to stop this bigotry and unethical conduct amongst his search committee members. The URI leadership see Sean Rogers as a credible representative for Black people at URI and they exploit this resource. He was handed a diversity job by URI for which he has zero specific experience nor a proven background of success in diversity advocacy or transformation. While he has a long list of degrees, none of them are relevant to addressing the entrenched systemic racism and colossal diversity task at URI. Mr. Rogers has been accused of cover-ups of discrimination for his bosses at URI and collusion to keep Mary Grace at CDO due to personal familial affiliations, knowing she is not competent. Rogers is the 'deep-throat' who gave Dr. Fosu information about URI's bigoted search committee but later capitulated under pressure and stopped talking [[click: read pages 7-9](#)]. He is not a critical race theorist nor a diversity expert and he has not engaged serious issues brought to his attention, nor has he conducted any civil rights advocacy of African-Americans, yet he is given sensitive jobs in race and diversity because he is Dr. Dooley and Kathy Collins' yes-sayer—he lacks independence and integrity when it comes to objective employment decisions. Sean Rogers is a good labor professor who should stick to his job of expertise and leave diversity to the experts. He and other dotting hand-picked faculty of color, help President Dooley, Kathy Collins and URI's white leadership maintain URI's 128 years of systemic racism and enduring white supremacy. Sean Rogers is URI's the antidote and response to any criticism of de facto Jim Crow discrimination on campus.

Professor Fosu, a consummate advocate for justice, suggested that something must be done to end this glaring racism at URI and they needed to plan and remove Mary Grace, because if she and URI's leadership could derail such a high level gifted candidate as Dr. Harry Alston, then there is no hope for real diversity change at URI and all parties (Rogers, H and Fosu) at the table agreed. Prof. Fosu asked them if they knew any lawyers in RI, and CH recommended his friend and Fosu said he would handle the cost for the family (meaning our Black community). CH recommended his friend, a civil rights attorney Casby Harrison III to help with the employment discrimination lawsuit against URI and Mary Grace. Furthermore, Professor Fosu has proof of glowing comments from Sean Rogers and CH who both caved in under pressure, and then joined Mary Grace and URI to help derail Dr. Alston's candidacy when other incentives from URI were added for their loyalty. In fact, Sean Rogers, CH, Kwame Fosu were all offered jobs after this horrendous lynching of Dr. Alston at URI. Though Sean Rogers and CH are enjoying their new positions at URI, Professor Louis Kwame Fosu turned down his lucrative job offer very respectfully—because he wanted no part of Dr. Harry Alston's High Noon lynching at URI [[click Fosu to Rolle email](#)].

If Sean Rogers and CH do not speak truth about this issue, Prof. Louis Kwame Fosu will testify under oath in civil and criminal proceedings and release other emails, and details of meetings and communication to the Attorney General Peter F. Neronha. Professor Fosu has expressed that he does not want to embarrass or harm his close friends at URI who capitulated under pressure from Kathy Collins, Dr. Dooley, and personal considerations that have no place in a professional job search process, which were stated at meetings by Sean Rogers and privately by CH. After deciding to be complicit in the derailment of Dr. Alston's candidacy, rather than insist on an honest process, CH explained to Professor Fosu the reason why he had capitulated instead of supporting the most qualified candidate. While details of his explanation are not included here—they will be attested to under oath. However, Sean Rogers was more confident and public and at an FSAAD meeting stated that despite his recognition that Dr. Alston was eminently qualified, he had to support Mary Grace

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and URI's decision, and then stated to FSAAD members that they should know that his mother is also Filipino like Mary Grace. However, Prof. Louis Kwame Fosu, also an immigrant who has been educated, coached and mentored by African-American scholars and politicians to excellence, has made it known that he will not allow any excuses to stand in the way of justice, especially when the excuses by Sean Rogers and evidence provided by Sean Rogers and others, in URI's effort to derail and destroy a brilliant African-American Dr. Harry Alston, support abject racism and a prima facie case for employment discrimination at URI. Our White URI leadership is very comfortable hiring first or second generation immigrants such as Prof. Kwame Fosu and Mary Grace, because URI has an expectation of silence and unquestioned loyalty from immigrants—and like all new immigrants who want to find favor with their bosses and move up in the institution, they do not complain and they do not speak or see the modern day lynchings of African-American scholars at URI and other universities. Professor Fosu states clearly that he is an immigrant (documentation can easily be provided for the court that his parents were Ghanaian diplomats); therefore, he holds no prejudice against immigrants, but this is about plain and simple justice for African-Americans. Sean Rogers having an immigrant mother from the Philippines does not give him an excuse or license to condone discrimination against highly qualified African-Americans, while aiding and abetting less qualified immigrants and abject incompetence because of a sense of kinship with his Filipino tribe—ALL hiring decisions must be based on merit not tribal affiliations. Professor Fosu has indicated that he will not be intimidated by their manipulative shield of exploiting race and ethnic origin to silence any criticism of their illegal unethical conduct and malfeasance in office.

The heart of the matter is that our URI leadership for 128 years has never once found an African-American they were bound to respect and hire in a leadership position; and the URI leadership has been incapable of making intelligent civil rights and diversity decisions for decades, as evidenced by the deplorable state of affairs for African-Americans at URI. Persons of color who were a part of these conversations and bore witness to these injustices may feel pressured or tempted to lie under oath. If they do so, they will all be indicted for perjury and collusion along with URI's leadership. Professor Fosu received inside information from Rogers and others, and documented the racism, discriminatory practices and collusion that occurred to derail Dr. Harry Alston's candidacy and sent this letter to Mary Grace directly and URI's leadership threatening a lawsuit [[click MaryG letter](#)].

However, Professor Fosu retreated from the lawsuit after URI President Dr. David Dooley had a very empathetic conversation with him on February 24, 2020 after a lecture on Reparations and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade with Dr. Anne Bailey. Professor Fosu said he found it impossible to move forward with legal action because, *"I found Dr. Dooley to be a good man, he was empathetic and President Dooley spoke insightfully and respectfully in support of the issues I had stated in my letter to Mary Grace and the leadership. He said it took courage to do that. I responded and said no, it was the right thing to do and everything in my letter was inside information."* Professor Fosu continues, *"My very unexpected meeting and kind conversation with Dr. Dooley ended well, with Dooley telling me that I would be part of this change that is needed in our university."* At that point, Professor Louis Fosu said he could not in good conscience move forward with any legal action. Then the email arrived announcing the appointment of [the worst URI candidate as Chief Diversity Officer](#). Prof. Fosu states that, *"Dr. David Dooley signaled to students and faculty the precise value and respect he places on the advancement of African-Americans and people of color at URI; therefore...he truly has a fear and disdain for African-Americans because this time Dooley has no excuse... he received my detailed letter and spoke to me directly. I did warn URI in my letter that there will be repercussions and Green Hall was not above the law."* [[click: page 9, para 1](#)].

- 26) **Deceit from URI Leadership:** A month after President Dooley received Prof. Fosu detailed letter about Mary Grace's incompetence and unethical conduct, Dooley sent this announcement [[Dooley-](#)

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[Grace Appt](#)], knowing that Kathy Collins and his leadership team had conducted an inequitable and fraudulent candidate process that was discriminatory and deliberately disadvantaged other CDO candidates to benefit Mary Grace. We organized students sincerely ask the following: (a) What was the compelling reason to appoint Mary Grace when she was the worst CDO candidate, and when she had demonstrated failure for one year at URI, and also demonstrated failure at Brown University? In our investigation, members of the Diversity Think Tank spoke to students and faculty at Brown and they indicated that Mary Grace was pressured and pushed out of Brown University for the same incompetence that she demonstrates here at URI [[click MaryG steps-down](#)]. (b) Was Mary Grace's appointment crucial or critically necessary, when all the search committee members were tainted, interested parties and not independent, and when all parties were colluding and in on "the fix"? [[click "Ineffective corrupted process" The-Fix, p.10](#)]. Especially when one considers that URI's leadership has demonstrated failure after failure with diversity appointments, they should have heeded advice and warnings in Professor Fosu's letter. (c) Was Mary Grace's illegal appointment desired and preferred, by the all-White leadership at URI, because an incompetent Chief Diversity Officer services their vision and unspoken goal of another 128 years of white supremacy and systemic racism at URI? **The undersigned students demand answers**, because ending systemic racism at URI is not about grand speeches and theoretical panel discussions moderated by WHITE faculty, WHITE administrators and President Dooley's chosen people-of-color, such as Mary Grace and Mr. Rogers.

- 27) **Fellowships and Postgraduate scholarships** are not marketed to a broad range of students. They seem to be made almost exclusively through the Honors department or perceived as such, and even where they are not, it still has that effect because they are not properly marketed to other students.
- 28) **Harrington School of Communication and Media** has been identified by students as being among the most racist, sexist and elitist departments. Students have complained about racism and sexism and a lack of transparency. We have email evidence as proof. The former Director of the Harrington School, also an Associate Dean in the College of Arts and Sciences was here at URI for over 12 years before he resigned and left for a new job only this year. Not only was this former Director involved in sexism but his term at the Harrington School was another example of the manifestation of systemic racism at URI. In his many years as Director there were many new faculty hired, and not once did he hire an African-American—all Director's hires were White men, White women, Asian men and Asian women. The two African-Americans, Dr. Kendall Moore and Dr. Vanessa Wynder Quainoo both were hired before Director's tenure at URI. This is unacceptable conduct and needs to be interrogated by the Attorney General because the Dean of Arts and Sciences and URI President are not capable of monitoring and protecting the equal employment civil rights of African-Americans, women and other marginalized groups. This is the department where students and women who spoke up were silenced and described in emails as "angry" instead of being taken seriously as assertive and speaking up for their dignity.

**APOLOGIZE:** We demand that President David Dooley and Dean Jen Riley apologize to students and faculty for enabling a racist Harrington School of Communication and Media with only two African-American Faculty. This is one of the largest URI departments with funding from the Harrington family and the endowed Christiane Amanpour Lecture Series and is unacceptable conduct. The Attorney General of Rhode Island needs to file Civil Rights charges against the previous associate dean who never once found an African-American he was bound to respect and hire. The former director left URI this year BUT he should still account for this travesty—otherwise, without accountability, his conscious or unconscious racism spreads as a disease wherever he goes. Moreover, his racism will metastasize as this disease of racism has metastasized at URI into a full-blown epidemic that is now afflicting and infecting many faculty of color, who have now become partners, shields and propagators for Dr. Dooley and Kathy Collins' gaslighting about how great diversity is

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at URI. Dooley and Collins maintain systemic racism at URI by co-opting and incentivizing silence, and in so doing corrupting members of the subordinated Black community who willingly seek acceptance by denying racism and/or administering the very racist policies that have promoted and protected white supremacy for 128 years.

- 29) **Harrington School:** Below is a comment from our team member who is a student at Harrington School that receives large donations, but the previous Director never cared to invest in African-American faculty or staff. We are happy the former Director is no longer at URI, but does it matter who fills the seat if the same systemic racism continues with whites benefiting from the system and controlling all discussions about diversity? Where is the Africana Studies department that must be in charge of all diversity discussions and all diversity committees—not the same white faculty and administrators who have maintained this horrendous URI racist system, blind to their role of maintaining and nurturing white supremacy in R.I., our liberal democratic New England-State.

Some of the connections made at a four-year university are what help us as students to stay on track towards the end goal for each student enrolled in classes, which is their diploma. The route towards obtaining that diploma varies for each and every one of us, from financial burden, loss of a loved one, managing personal mental health, and many of the obstacles life throws at us. Something keeps us here. The environment in which we find ourselves, usually dictates how well we will perform, whether it be in a course or at work, so working towards an environment where everyone can feel comfortable is important. The goal is not to force people to agree, but by exposing each other to our various worldviews developed during the course of our lives; having a student population and faculty that matches the makeup of students demographically would be a step in the right direction. Academically - In the classroom I have only had classes with two black professors in 7 semesters. - Number of Full-time Harrington School Faculty - 70 - Black professors – 2 - Number of Full-time Department of Political Science Faculty - 14 - Black professors 2 - Percentage of black students a part of Honor Society – negligible. Black fraternities/sororities in Greek Life – 0.

- 30) **Hire more** African-Americans and Latinos in administrative positions and as chefs in dining services; and offer opportunities for equitable and authentic advancement.
- 31) **Human Resources:** Anne Marie Coleman and Laura Kenerson need to be fired. It is impossible for this egregious level of racism, academic tyranny and employment discrimination to exist at URI without complicity or sheer negligence from the Human Resources leadership—we ask the Attorney General to investigate the Human Resources Department that have had so many violations over the years that have been ignored by the President of URI. When President Dooley and Provost DeHayes give statements about ending racism and systemic racism it is not theoretical – ending systemic racism means proactively identifying the people who manage the racist policies to maintain an all-White supremacy at URI. It is NOT by accident or coincidence. Our Faculty Adviser Louis Kwame Fosu will testify under oath about a culture of racism at URI that supports a pattern of abuse and collusion between administrators, handpicked Black faculty, and White faculty, who deftly contravene the equal employment opportunity laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant because of the person's race, color, religion, sex. Mary Grace and Sean Rogers were not placed in diversity positions by accident or because of any civil rights qualifications or demonstrated track record of advocating for change (sources from faculty and students at Brown University state Mary Grace was mediocre at Brown and had to resign [Mary Grace steps-down]). These two people of color, Mary Grace and Mr. Rogers use the color of their skin as a shield against criticism for their lack of experience, ineffective diversity performance and continued maintenance of systemic racism—they are the favorites of the all-white leadership structure because they support and maintain URI's racist



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ineffective policies. Furthermore, Mary Grace and Sean Rogers have participated in cover-ups of racist employment discriminatory practices at URI.

- 32) **In Human Resources**, there are serious audit findings of negligence and passing the sensitive work off to underpaid and already overworked administrative staff. They have diminished this work that is meant to defend the rights and dignity of ALL employees and provide strong compliance with equity policies. Most agree HR is not doing their job. The approach is elitist and strips those working hardest for our students of their dignity and their right to make a living wage. This administration has failed—allowing structural racism, classism and all forms of inequity to thrive. All who maintained this corrupt racist system, Mary Grace, Mr. Rogers, Anne Marie Coleman and Laura Kenerson need to be uprooted, thrown out and replaced with authentic civil rights, race, diversity experts and human resources experts who respect advancement of African Americans, Latinos and the rule of law under the civil rights act. We will request a Congressional hearing from Congressional Black Caucus Chair, Congresswoman Karen Bass [#RootOutRacism](#)
- 33) **Lack of Black and Hispanic professors in every single department, while Whites are grossly overrepresented at 79.6% [click URI's appalling statistics]. We propose an immediate freeze on the hiring of white professors as there has been a de facto freeze on African-Americans, Latino and Native American professors for millennia.**
- 34) **Scholarships:** Offer more scholarship opportunities for prospective African-American/Black, Latino, International, and other students of color. This means creating new funds that are not only focused on white needs. Several African-American/Black professors can help raise funds and our faculty adviser has in fact approached Katharine Hazard Flynn, URI Foundation employees, and department chairs with funding opportunities, but suggestions were repeatedly ignored because his suggestions do not support a white vision of diversity and inclusion.
- 35) **Nearly all-White police:** Address the fact that there is now a nearly all-White police force at URI that treats Black students in a heavy-handed manner as compared to White students. One student described how three police cars pulled up on her while she was waiting in a parking lot in a car – she described this as overkill and certainly would not have occurred if she was a White female in that car.
- 36) **Police aggression** on campus, we as students and police treat black students, even females, with complete disrespect and unnecessary force. They will never manhandle a female who looks like their white daughter – how dare they manhandle Black female students attending simple concerts.
- 37) **Professors** exhibit a blatant lack of cultural competence and sensitivity to the lived experience of being Black in the US and living under the glare and judgement of hate. **Professors** who make racist comments, thus provoking confrontations with students, will often subsequently label the provoked student ‘violent’. We African-American/Black, Latino and Native American students work extremely hard to get into college – and we do not get admitted to a university to engage in degrading fights with our professors—but we will stand up for ourselves and we will not accept insults and disrespect by ignorant white professors who have no cultural intelligence. If we are insulted, we will respond, we always claim our dignity and will not walk away with our heads down. Many of our professors do not have the cultural intelligence to speak to us with respect and we will not be insulted and treated with disrespect in class. It is essential that URI initiate race and cultural sensitivity classes for professors—especially those who are in continuous altercations with us.
- 38) **Provide tenure** to African-American and Latino professors in the Africana Studies Department and other Departments. **We demand equity**—why are several mediocre white professors and department

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chairs/directors tenured, yet the most clever and best Black professors that teach and educate us with excellence are not tenured and are not directors and chairs of departments?

- 39) **Remove** “and Providence Plantations” from all University of Rhode Island documentation. Gov. Gina Raimondo signed an Executive Order Monday, June 22, 2020 to remove the phrase “Providence Plantations” from all documents. It is self-evident that “Providence Plantations” degrades African-Americans and other students of color, and if it is not self-evident that the phrase reinforces white supremacy, then you are a racist and should not be at URI.
- 40) **Require** every professor (tenured and untenured), full and part-time faculty members and affiliated persons of the University of Rhode Island to undergo mandatory in-person anti-racism training. They should also be evaluated and continuously re-evaluated by multicultural organizations and administration of color for racist behavior and unconscious racism. Professors with repeated complaints of racist behavior from students should be removed or URI will be sued.
- 41) **Some white** students use racist derogatory language offensive against Blacks with impunity—reports are covered up by Kathy Collins and the office of Student Affairs. In fact, students of color have cited many occasions where carloads of white students jeer at them and shout vulgarities, demanding that they “go back to where they came from!”
- 42) **Talent Development** Program: This program is run excellently by Mr. Gerald Williams; however, the stated vision is: “We strive to be a nationally recognized program committed to Scholar access and success by supporting Scholars to build a foundation for persistence.” Why doesn’t URI fund Mr. Williams’ vision to expand this program nationally for out-of-state students of color and low-income backgrounds, beginning with states in the northeast to include New York and New Jersey and states in New England? This will increase outside donors to this excellent program. Foundations and Wall Street bankers support these types of programs that uplift disadvantaged youth. Expanding Talent Development will also increase diversity on campus and some of the current Endowment and Capital Campaign Funding being raised should go towards this important program. URI cannot keep paying lip service to diversity. Mr. Williams does an excellent job so we must support his vision for the program—we must all think as Big as Mr. Williams—this should not be an empty slogan at URI.
- 43) **The “angry Black woman label”** to silence Black women by professors and administrators on University campuses needs to end. Here we live in a society where only White men and their agents are allowed to be angry and stupid and keep their jobs. But when we have legitimate concerns about 128 years of white supremacy at URI where no Black person has been appointed or hired to a senior leadership position, we are labelled angry Black women. We are intelligent women fighting for our community, fighting for the next generation, fighting for our dignity, fighting not to be subordinated and silenced by white patriarchy. **We are fighting and we will fight just as three Black women: Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi created Black Lives Matter to end the killing of our bodies and souls and we will not back down until this ends.**
- 44) **Student Senate:** The power dynamic at URI demands that a bicameral system must be adopted in both senates. Students must vote to approve proposals by faculty senate; and Faculty votes to approve proposals by student senate. Remember our school exists because of students; and our voices need to be heard and respected, so that mindless votes by the Faculty Senate to cancel Spring Break do not occur again. **We demand that Spring break is reinstated.** Furthermore, to break the stranglehold of systemic racism, we ask that the URI Student Senate clause in the Constitution of the Senate that mandates the Director of Memorial Union to also serve as an advisor to the Senate—**be abolished.** Fundamental principles of checks and balances are needed and necessary for every democratic

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process. Here we have Kathy Collins or whoever will replace her as VP influencing every aspect of our debate and decisions. That is undemocratic and helps maintain the cultural hegemonic worldview and control overall policy and decision making. The Director of Memorial Union works under the Vice President of Student Life. By choosing and voting for a new INDEPENDENT advisor to the Senate, the crucial and necessary appropriate checks and balances are established.

- 45) **Tuition Aid Assistance Grant or TAG** was wrongfully distributed, the aid in the total of \$3,000. Over half the students who live on campus were displaced, a lot of whom happen to be minorities or people from low income economic backgrounds. The TAG is contingent on your continuous enrollment at the University and was put towards tuition instead of in a refund form. Students received \$1500 this semester and will not receive the other half until Fall 2021. This is unacceptable and needs to be corrected immediately. The lack of initiative by the leadership here at URI serves as a roadblock to any attempts made to provide students with the resources and support that they desperately need.
- 46) **URI Faculty Senate**, we require more diversity among the group to represent the demographics of URI. Need professors who are intellectuals and experts on African-American history, art, Black women's empowerment, leadership, business organization, civil rights, diversity and inclusion, constitutional law and policy--those who have dedicated their lives to educate, write, advocate for and demand change successfully in the real world for African-Americans and marginalized people. [Bylaws must be changed to include Faculty of Practice](#) because they are proven to be some of our best and brightest faculty and knowledgeable experts in the real world. Their expertise is needed by students and faculty because they have real life experience on how to change society – not theoretical rhetoric we hear from many professors who talk and teach about race, but have been dead silent for decades about metastasized racism at URI because they do not see or hear us marginalized students.

**IN SUMMARY, to end 128 years of all-white supremacy at URI, which is self-evident by systemic hiring racist policies at our Rhode Island university, we demand the following:**

- (i) The next President of the University of Rhode Island must be an African-American with a lineage to slavery. The Criminal Justice Department and Harrington School must diversify leadership and faculty immediately to reflect the demographics of our nation, the United States.** We have experts on our team who can help staff all departments with erudite African-Americans and Latinos, since it is self-evident that [URI's Trustees and leadership are not competent to perform this task](#).
- (ii)** Current recruitment firms for senior leadership must change immediately. Current recruiting firm is using the same racist procedures and embedded cultural hegemonic discriminatory practices that have produced the [same all-White leadership at URI for 128 years](#).
- (iii) All Search and Leadership Committees must include: Africana Studies Department Chair Professor Dr. Vanessa Wynder Quainoo**, African-American students from the Black Student Union and the leaders in the Africana Studies Department—because it is us who need diversity, not the white people clogging search committees. We have the intelligence to choose excellent leaders and do not need supervision from you who failed us for 128-years by maintaining all-white supreme leaders.
- (iv)** Recruit and retain African-American and Latino students and immediately remove barriers for Black Greek organizations to open chapters on campus. We stand firm on this.
- (v)** The two highly qualified candidates **Dr. Harry Alston** and **Dr. Sylvia Spears** who were derailed by Mary Grace, Kathy Collins and the URI leadership must be offered the position of VP for Diversity (Chief Diversity Officer) and/or position of Director of Diverse Faculty Recruitment and Retention. CDO

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position shall be elevated to a VP position for authority, autonomy and effectiveness, as all good institutions have adopted [\[click Sean Rogers email\]](#) and [\[click CH email\]](#). **We stand firm on this.**

**(vi)** Current CDO **Mary Grace** must be fired or transferred out of the Community, Equity and Diversity (CED) office, as she is ineffective and incompetent. She has the ardent support of those who intrinsically benefit from URI's systemic racist policies that she helps maintain for the all-White URI leadership—while using her color as a shield against criticism. She failed at Brown University and had to resign.

**(vii)** Current Executive Director for Inclusive Excellence in the College of Business, **Sean Rogers must be removed**, he can remain in the business school as a labor business professor. The URI leadership see Sean Rogers as a credible representative for Black people at URI and they exploit this resource. He was handed a diversity job by URI for which he has zero specific experience nor a proven background of success in diversity advocacy or transformation. While he has a long list of degrees, none of them are relevant to addressing the entrenched systemic racism and colossal diversity task at URI. Rogers is the 'deep-throat' who gave Dr. Fosu information about URI's bigoted search committee but later capitulated under pressure and stopped talking [\[click: read pages 7-9\]](#). He is not a critical race theorist nor a diversity expert, yet he is given sensitive jobs in race and diversity because he is Dr. Dooley and Kathy Collins' yes-sayer—he lacks independence and integrity when it comes to objective employment decisions. Rogers is a labor professor who should [work on additional discrimination research to help him understand the impact of his unethical conduct on job applicants](#). If we students continue to see his involvement in diversity leadership matters and search committee matters, we will create a focused national campaign against Mr. Rogers-- as is our right under the first amendment until he resigns. **No more LACKEYS at URI – we need ETHICAL INDEPENDENT thinkers with INTEGRITY to end systemic RACISM!**

**(viii)** Either the CDO position is raised to an independent sovereign VP level position so the person can be effective; or the controlling VP Kathy Collins of the Division of Student Affairs needs to be removed from office if URI is to move forward and develop a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) program with high caliber African-Americans who are critical race theory and DEI experts and also well versed in civil rights advocacy and possessing deep contacts in the African-American civil rights community.

**(ix)** **Tuition Aid Assistance Grant** or TAG was wrongfully distributed as tuition credits, the aid in the total of \$3,000 should directly mitigate the housing and economic needs of displaced students. Over half the students who live on campus were displaced, a lot of whom happen to be minorities or people from low income economic backgrounds. **Refund full amount. Give us our money! End academic tyranny!!**

**(x)** Henceforth, **ALL** diversity and search committees must be made up of a majority African-Americans and Latinos—there is no need for White faculty/administrators on committees because it is self-evident that they have proven themselves to be incapable of fairness and are hopeless at recruiting equitably and impartially. White faculty and administrators have proved themselves inept at adhering to equal employment Title VII policies for African-Americans, Latinos and Native Americans. Racists and unconscious racists invariably produce racist policies to maintain systemic racism—not racial equity.

**(xi)** **Human Resources:** Anne Marie Coleman and Laura Kenerson need to be fired. It is impossible for this egregious level of racism and employment discrimination to exist at URI, without their complicity and without a normalized integration of racial discrimination in Human Resources—maybe silent and complicit labor professor, Sean Rogers should reveal findings of his racial discrimination research at URI?

**Therefore**, on October 24, 2020, we the undersigned leaders representing organized students for social change and justice at the University of Rhode Island and Board Trustees of the Diversity Think Tank, are appealing to civil rights leaders and elected officials in the United States to read and hear our demands for



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dignity, equality and racial equity, in our efforts to end 128 years of endemic systemic and structural racism at our University of Rhode Island. We believe as Professor Louis Kwame Fosu states, “*Even the whitest structurally racist university, in one of the whitest states in our nation, such as the University of Rhode Island, can deliberately transform to become an oasis of diversity.*” With a firm reliance on the protection of the United States Constitution and Civil Rights Act, we mutually pledge to each other to fight honorably and courageously using Martin Luther King’s principles of love and nonviolence; to never accept a dehumanizing Three-Fifths compromise, and to never concede until racism with all its normalized racist inequities throughout the social, political and economic machinations of white supremacy are exposed and uprooted!!! [#RootOutRacism](#). To that end, we sign this document with hope and a vision of creating dignified, diverse, enlightened, equitable and loving environments in academic institutions for African-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and other marginalized people, by systematically identifying and ending organizational culture and policies that detriment racial equity, reinforce structural racism and condone metastasized racism. *¡Hemos hecho una causa más grande que nosotros mismos!*



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**Michael A’vant (URI Student)**  
*Co-Chair Board of Trustees*  
*Diversity Think Tank Trustee*



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**Mitchell Asante (URI Student)**  
**URI Senate Executive Committee**  
*Co-Chair Board of Trustees*  
*Diversity Think Tank Trustee*



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**Sean Miller (URI Student)**  
**URI Interfraternity Council President**  
*Strategic Policy Director*  
*Diversity Think Tank Trustee*



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**Benjamin Wilkie (URI Student)**  
*Outreach & Advocacy Director*  
*Diversity Think Tank Trustee*



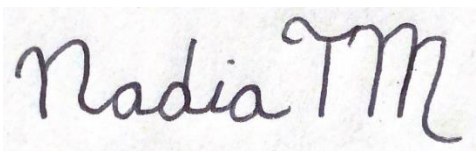
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**Ashley Heaven Diaz (URI Student 2020)**  
*Public Relations & Training Director*  
*Diversity Think Tank Trustee*



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**Professor Louis Kwame Fosu, JD/MBA**  
**Political Science and Honors Program**  
**Faculty, University of Rhode Island**  
*Executive Director, Diversity Think Tank*



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**Nadia Tate-Maloney (URI Student 2020)**  
*Human Resources Director*  
*Diversity Think Tank Trustee*