Dear students,

As the school year comes to a close, we recognize that in many ways, the future is far from certain. Recent events in the United States have challenged us to examine our values as a society. The deaths of George Floyd and so many other members of the Black community, the protests that have ensued, and the at times confrontational response by police forces in the U.S. have prompted questions that may be uncomfortable for many of us to answer. We have seen protests in our streets, local businesses boarded up, and the many law enforcement officers present in our community. These may be unfamiliar in San Luis Obispo. For many of our classmates, our friends, and our colleagues, the struggle for equal recognition and fair treatment is anything but new.

The International Center recognizes that these are times of heightened stress for many of our community members. To those of you who are hurting, those of you who are angry or afraid, and those of you who are protesting and thirsting for change—we stand with you. We commend your efforts to shed light peacefully on the injustices in our society. We affirm that Black lives matter.

For anyone finding it difficult to understand the current situation and anyone wanting to grow in your knowledge of social justice movements, we encourage you to take time this summer to read, listen and think proactively about how you can be an ally to our communities of color. To anyone struggling with the weight of recent events, we encourage you to practice self-care and to consider utilizing the resources of the Campus Health and Wellbeing Center, free counseling services, and the after-hours Psychological Crisis hotline (805 756 2511).

As always, the International Center is here to support you, and we ask you to reach out if you would like further resources from us.

Stay safe, be well, and be kind to each other.

In solidarity,

The International Center