We, at the Student Environmental Resource Center (SERC), condemn the recent acts of violence against the Black community, as well as the historic systemic racism and oppression that has allowed such acts of brutality to persist. Our center is rooted and grounded in values of community, love, and justice, and we rise in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and our Black community members, neighbors, students, staff, and faculty.

Our programs and initiatives have been shaped by the people, animals, plants, and natural systems around us. We recognize the deep interconnectedness of the roles and responsibilities we have for each other and to contribute towards a more socially, environmentally, racially just future. We must be actively anti-racist, and work specifically against anti-Black racism, in our support of communities that provide safety and justice for all Black lives.

As a part of the University of California, Berkeley, we currently occupy the territory of Huichin, the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochebay Ohlone, the successors of the historic and sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County.\(^1\) We acknowledge that the land we operate on and benefit from is built on ideologies of colonization and white supremacy, and how this has had damaging and negative impacts on the pursuit of a more equitable society. As a department within UC Berkeley, we will use our privilege and positionality to highlight the connections of environmental issues and race. As an environmental resource center, we affirm that there is no climate or environmental justice without racial justice.

With this in mind, the recent acts of racist violence and the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Oluwatoyin Salau, Tony McDade, and so many others has only made more visible what was always present – a culture of white supremacy where Black lives – and Black trans lives – are deemed controversial. This culture of white supremacy permeates every facet of society against BIPOC, from the systemic denial of housing and financial services via redlining, to the fact that Black and Indigenous people are five times more at risk of getting the novel coronavirus COVID-19 than white people, and lastly and most importantly, the environmental sustainability movement as a whole.

The destruction of the planet is inextricably linked to white supremacy and colonization, born out of a colonizer mindset to extract and exploit without regard for the lives of people, and for the Earth.

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\(^1\) The Ethnic Studies Library recognizes that Berkeley sits on the territory of Huichin, the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochebay Ohlone, the successors of the historic and sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to the Ohlone people.
Many of the ideologies of early ‘environmentalists’ in this country - the Muirs, the Roosevelts, the Pinchots - were either complicit or actively engaged with the systemic genocide and displacement of Indigenous populations across the country. Conservation as a field has centered keeping wilderness pristine and untouched, which erases the lives of Indigenous populations and their relationship to the environment before the arrival of European settlers. Though the mainstream environmental movement has been historically dominated by white activists and narratives, we want to recognize the work the Black community has led within the movement. From the first environmental justice protests in Afton, North Carolina, when the people of Warren County protested toxic waste dumping in their predominantly Black, poor, rural community, to the ongoing organizing efforts in Flint, Michigan in demanding clean drinking water. However, our support is not and cannot be contingent on these accomplishments.

As environmentalists, we recognize that anti-racist work is environmental work. We are committed to the lifelong mission of dismantling oppressive systems and fighting for an equitable, just, and resilient future. As a student resource center, we will work to share anti-racist community resources, uplift activist voices, and create space for healing.

Our work at SERC is inspired by The Story of the Hummingbird, shared by environmentalist and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Professor Wangari Maathai. When a forest and home to many animals begins to burn from a fire, a lone hummingbird takes it upon itself to drop water to combat the flames. Despite other, much larger animals refusing to help and even belittling the hummingbird, the small but mighty animal persists, ‘I am doing the best I can.’ Channeling the perseverance of the hummingbird, we are dedicated to doing all that we can in dismantling racism and providing resources and support for others to do the same.

Our official ongoing commitments are as follows:

- Integrate anti-racist work into our strategic vision plan to ensure that we continually support anti-racist work on campus and in our community
- Upholding all SERC Staff to base their work in environmental and racial justice
- Collaborate with and support recruitment and retention organizations on campus
- Create spaces for celebration, healing, and joy (such as Earth Justice Month)
- Update SERC hiring processes and programs to address implicit bias
- Expand the SERC Environmental Justice resource folder with activist resources and community support/resilience for COVID-19
- Continue to play an active role in the Chancellor’s Advisory Committee on Sustainability Working Group for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Sustainability

Published August 2020