



From: GRO Executive Board
Date: 08 July 2020
Subject: GRO Statement Regarding Noose Found at Stieff Silver

Dear Homewood Graduate Students,

Like you, we were appalled to learn of the abhorrent, racist display of a noose at the construction site of an Engineering lab in JHU's Stieff Silver building.

In America, the noose is one of the most potent symbols of racist violence against African Americans. Between 1882 and 1968, there are records that more [than 4,700 people were lynched in the US](#) with an incredibly disproportionate 73% of them being Black during a time when Black Americans accounted for [less than 14%](#) of the total US population. For those who want to learn more about why the noose is such a potent symbol of racial hatred, we share the following resources [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#), [\[3\]](#), [\[4\]](#), [\[5\]](#) (content warning: depictions of racist violence). That such a heinous act of racism and hatred happened in one of our buildings, within a short walk of the main Homewood campus, leaves us incredibly saddened and frightened. This act was carried out between [Homewood Campus](#) and [Hampden](#), and both of these areas bear the weight of white supremacist histories, reminding us that such experiences are not neatly left in the past. It reminds us that the fight against racism is long and never-ending. As graduate students, we are also angry and outraged, and we cannot state strongly enough how seriously we take this despicable act.

As an institution of higher education, we must be committed to building an inclusive and anti-racist environment for people of color. We must utilize our resources, knowledge, and skills to confront racism, both systemic and acute, and not be silent about injustice. The administration must continue to take strong and unambiguous positions, and change current policies in order to support the inclusion of underrepresented minority populations. Now more than ever, we must intensify our work to fight against discrimination on our campus, in our communities, and across the nation.

We encourage all graduate students to reach out to their departments and inquire about what programs, initiatives, and committees exist within their department whose focus is building and enhancing diversity, fighting discrimination, and serving the underrepresented minorities. We further encourage students, to whatever extent possible, to assist those efforts. Through the



concerted action of the graduate student body, we can demonstrate that these are matters of grave importance to graduate students, thereby promoting change on campus.

As the investigation of this horrendous act evolves, we will advocate that the perpetrators be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible under the law. We will advocate that the OIE investigation be transparent and that OIE provide regular updates to JHU affiliates and community members about the progress of its investigation. It must be made abundantly and unquestionably clear that our campus will not tolerate this kind of hate.

During this trying time, we want to remind everyone that there are a number of resources available to you through wellness.jhu.edu, including [resources specifically dedicated to racial trauma](#). We are also sharing again this independently collected [page](#) of resources on racial trauma developed by the Graduate Student Association at the School of Medicine.

Sincerely,
The GRO

Approved by vote of the GRO General Council, July 7th 2020