A Message from the Neuroscience Graduate Group: Recent Events June 2020

The events of the past several days have reminded us all that racism is ingrained in our society. On a personal level, it is evident in interactions like those caught on video between Amy Cooper and Christian Cooper. On an institutional level, it is evident in the fact that not only was George Floyd killed by a police officer, but the other officers there were not charged with a crime until enormous pressure was provided to do so. It is also evident in science and engineering, which, for example, include a smaller proportion of Blacks than in the full U.S. workforce (5% versus 12%).

We in the NGG are committed to fighting against racism and working towards a more just society. As a first step, we acknowledge that racism exists and declare our opposition to it in all forms. We also stand in full support of our black students and colleagues and will do everything we can to ensure their safety and success.

We also will be pursuing new initiatives in the coming months and years to try to be part of the solution. We will continue to listen to our trainees to learn from them how to make the NGG a more inclusive environment. We will continue to expand our outreach efforts to underserved communities, in particular reaching out to young people who might not otherwise know what neuroscience is and the positive role it can play in society. We will continue to expand our recruitment efforts, including reaching out to students from historically black colleges and universities and insisting that our Departments emphasize diversity in their new faculty hires. We also are working on ways to better support the efforts of our existing students and faculty to be more engaged with society at large.

We know these pursuits are just a start, and real change will take serious and sustained effort. We are committed to maintaining that effort and working towards eliminating racism and injustice in our society.

Sincerely,
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