



Dear ASA,

I'm writing today with great sadness for our members and our society. I know the power of statistics to make a difference in changing the world and fighting systemic racism, biases, and inequities in our society. I'll talk about that power in a minute. But first, I want to speak from the heart.

Our deepest condolences go to the families of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and their friends and neighbors who are suffering greatly. Our condolences extend to all those who have experienced this suffering in other instances and in other ways, who experience on a daily basis the trauma that comes with being black in our society. These three instances are only the latest in a long line of horror, much of which has not received the well-deserved attention these most recent incidents have drawn.

The ASA is committed to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. In our conduct policy, we commit to being "a community that welcomes and supports people of all backgrounds and identities." Just as our discipline of statistics is a discipline that strengthens the work of other sciences, our commitment to a safe and welcoming environment extends beyond the statistical community. That sort of environment simply does not exist for large portions of society.

### **What can we, ASA members, do?**

We can do much that is well within our reach. We can continue to educate ourselves and others to increase awareness of social justice and equity issues and bring forth action and mobilization. We can partner with social scientists who conduct research into justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, and effective responses to acts of injustice. We can continue to stress the importance of statistics and well-designed research in revealing societal problems and solutions to them. We can use our communication tools to focus on this work: social media, special sessions at our conferences, research articles in our technical journals, and general interest articles in our outreach magazines (*Significance*, *CHANCE*, and *Amstat News*). We can volunteer through organizations such as [Statistics Without Borders](#).

Most importantly, we can be especially supportive of each other in these trying times. We are a diverse community in many respects, but we share common goals and a vision that "a world that relies on data and statistical thinking to drive discovery and inform decisions" would be a much safer, healthier, more

equitable, and more just world. Check in on each other. Post in the various ASA communities and respond to others' posts in thoughtful, graceful ways. Look for opportunities to collaborate. Converse with colleagues, friends, and family about the gravity of the social trauma we are experiencing and how we can do our part to help change the culture that sustains structural racism. Connect, connect, connect.

I write as your executive director, a position I'm grateful and honored to hold. But I also write as a father with sons of the age and race that make them less safe when they leave the house than they would be if they were my age and race.

ASA presidents Wendy Martinez, Rob Santos, and Karen Kafadar join me in imploring us all to bring the power of our discipline to bear on the enormous injustices, disparities, and inequities faced by African Americans and all persons of color.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Wasserstein". The signature is stylized and cursive, with the first letter "R" being particularly large and prominent.

Ron Wasserstein,  
ASA Executive Director