The Engineering Undergraduate Society at UBC stands with and supports the BlackLivesMatter movement and the Black community. Over the past few months, there has been a widespread and appropriate worldwide response in protest of police brutality and systemic racial injustice. We have waited to publicize our support to ensure we could commit to real, structural changes within the EUS, and to collaborate with the Faculty of Applied Science and UBC to support change in all aspects of our community.

Canada, Vancouver, and UBC are not free from systemic racism, and we see its damaging effects in police brutality against Black and Indigenous folx, the destruction of Hogan’s Alley in Vancouver, and even profiling of students on UBC’s Vancouver campus. Engineering itself has been and still is a notoriously exclusive profession, and engineering projects disproportionately negatively affect communities of colour. As student leaders and future engineers, we must be aware of past and present injustices, and commit to real structural change.

We acknowledge that the EUS is not perfect, and that engineering has not always been welcoming to minority students. To date, we have not collected data to compare our UBC Engineering demographics to that of the general population, but will do so in the future through the Engineering Undergraduate Experience survey. With this survey, we hope to identify key obstacles facing minority students, and to track the efficacy of our initiatives over time. We are also looking internally to our organization to learn how we can encourage further diversity and support our BIPOC students. UBC Engineering has organizations dedicated to Women In Engineering and members of the LGBTQ+ community, but we have very little infrastructure set up to support our BIPOC students.

As an organization, we are forming an Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, Indigeneity, and Sustainability (EDIIS) Committee, dedicated to embedding these values in all operations of the EUS. Alongside the EDIIS Committee, we have formed a Mental Health and Wellness Committee to understand how the EUS and APSC can better support the wellness of the many communities within UBC Engineering. Further, our executive team now has representation on EDI sub-committees within the Faculty of Applied Science, to provide additional student representation at the faculty level. As the EUS, we are working to create a space to foster discussions about race within UBC Engineering, we fully support the formalization of this space in our role as allies. We will be further communicating our actions towards anti-racism in our community as we go forward.

This movement is not about us. This is about understanding that we all must take the time to identify the issues, understand them, and address them. We will do our best to advocate for students and elevate Black voices, and encourage all our community members, especially non-Black or indigenous students, to become educated, informed, and strong allies. We have compiled a list of resources - including educational texts, petitions to sign, organizations worth donating to, mental health services, and more at ubcengineers.ca/blm. We support you now, and we support you always.
We are looking for students-at-large to join our newly formed committees, and highly encourage any student who is interested to apply. The application will be available on our website at ubcengineers.ca/committee-applications. We are committed to improving as an Undergraduate Society, and would appreciate any feedback. Please, feel free to contact us at voice@ubcengineers.ca and tell us how we can do better, and what you want from your EUS.

In solidarity,

EUS Executive Team
2020-2021
UBC Vancouver
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