Dear Economics, Ag Business and Business Economics Majors:

This weekend brought several new reminders of the persistent racial inequities in our society. On Sunday night, police officers in Kenosha, Wisconsin, shot Jacob Blake, a Black man, in what appears to be another instance of unjustified police violence. Closer to home, we learned about racist criminal activity in Roberts Hall. These are just the most recent reminders of the way in which prejudice manifests itself in the United States today. Sometimes the list of reminders seems so long responding to each new event can be overwhelming. Yet it is essential to say these events are not OK.

As a white male, I cannot know what it is like to live in fear that the color of my skin would provoke implicit or overt acts of prejudice. But I can try to imagine how different my daily experience would be if I didn’t have this privilege.

As the Iowa State University [Principles of Community](https://www.diversity.iastate.edu/connect/principles) state: “…we must strive to overcome historical and divisive biases in our society. Therefore, we commit ourselves to create and maintain a community in which all students, staff, faculty and administrators can work together in an atmosphere free from discrimination, and to respond appropriately to all acts of discrimination.”

The principle role of our department is educational; we strive to increase knowledge of economics, and to use that knowledge to increase our understanding of the world in which we live. When terrible events intrude upon our world, we cannot ignore them. I hope you will join me in condemning these and other racists acts. Please also take a moment to review these anti-racism resources available via the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences diversity programs website: <https://www.diversity.cals.iastate.edu/anti-racism-resources>.

Please know I am always available to speak with you about anything that interferes with your ability to participate in our community or to be successful in your studies. You can reach me via email at [jlrosenb@iastate.edu](mailto:jlrosenb@iastate.edu) or phone at [515-294-1257](tel:1-515-294-1257).

Sincerely

Joshua Rosenbloom

Chair

Department of Economics