



October 27, 2020

Dear Members of the McMaster Community,

The [\*Systemic Review of the Black Student-Athlete Experience and the McMaster Athletics Climate\*](#) has now been completed. The experiences of Black student-athletes recounted in the report are deeply disturbing and point to a culture of systemic anti-Black racism within the Department of Athletics and Recreation.

I want to thank the past and current student-athletes who participated in the review. These are your personal stories, your insights and your voices and they need to be heard. You have shared your experiences and brought clearly to light the actions and inaction that scarred your time as athletes at McMaster and as ongoing members of our community.

On behalf of the University I apologize for the anti-Black racism you experienced. I am deeply sorry that effective action was not taken to prevent this; there are no excuses for the behaviour you endured. I assure you that we are listening and that action is already being taken to implement the report's recommendations and to begin the work with the Department and the broader university community to help us eliminate systemic racism.

I encourage everyone to read the student testimonies in this report. Not only are they powerful, they will also increase your awareness and understanding of those whose experience at McMaster may have been very different than your own. Please also consider carefully the gaps the report identifies that contributed to the culture we need to change.

The conversation and action that needs to happen now depends on our ability to rebuild trust. As the lead reviewer, Dr. Ivan Joseph states, "I view this process as an exercise in understanding. Together, our job is to use this as an opportunity for learning, for expanding the way we think, and for seeing more clearly, more deeply, more broadly." McMaster's Dean of Students and AVP Students and Learning has already launched [an action plan to implement the recommendations](#) and our AVP Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Arig al Shaibah, will continue to provide her experienced guidance and counsel.

I sincerely thank Dr. Joseph, all of the Task Force members and especially the student-athletes who shared their life stories in such meaningful ways. When McMaster initiated the Task Force and appointed the lead reviewer, we asked for an honest and forthright review that would create a deeper understanding of the Black student-athlete experience and set the course we need to follow to eliminate systemic racism. The report has delivered exactly that. We are grateful to have such a clear understanding of the issues and of the important work we need to do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DFR", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Farrar