

June 22, 2020

To Danielle, Natalia, Maria, Ameerah and the Manhattanville Community,

Thank you for your message, and for your thoughtful list of items that need to be addressed. We can – and we will - push the agenda for change, and I am personally committed to doing that. But it takes more than a president and an administration to actually make things happen. I have forwarded your letter of demands to the Manhattanville Board of Trustees and will be meeting with the Board tomorrow evening to discuss your letter. I have also tasked various members of my Cabinet to begin to work on this with faculty, staff, and alumni, so many of you will be hearing from them over the next day or two. But most importantly, we need you – the students and alumni – to bring your experience to the table and to work with us to make substantive change. Racism is systemic in American society, and Manhattanville is part of that society, so students here are victims of the same racist undercurrent that pervades our nation.

For a start, let me say that the photo of the Brownson takeover with the accompanying text should not have been posted in the context of Juneteenth. Along with all my Cabinet I will say that I am sorry that this was posted. This is not what Juneteenth is about. We can and should be proud of Mother Dammann, and we should honor her legacy, but history cannot be an excuse for not taking decisive action in the present.

I will work with all sectors of the College, from the Board on down, to address the issues raised in your letter and will get back to you with some specific answers and a list of action items by next week or the week after.

Thank you again!

**Michael Geisler
President**