

To: thaa@thaa.org, events@thaa.org, president@thaa.org, selina@thaa.org

Subject: THAA take meaningful action now

Dear Townsend Harris Alumni Association,

My name is **[Name]**, graduate of the class of **[class year]**. To say the least, the [statement](#) the alumni association sent out to the Townsend Harris community this morning is lacking at best, and ignorant at worst. The vague language of the statement fails to discuss the murder of George Floyd, Black Lives Matter, or the police violence that perpetuates anti-Black racism across the United States. A message centered on compelling the graduates of Townsend Harris to aid the fight against injustice should engage with it directly and not shy away from naming things for what they are. Condemning racism, police brutality, and discrimination in our society are central for graduates to fulfill the Ephebic Oath, and it is shameful to see that our own alumni association has failed to recognize that. This is especially true given our school is in Queens, the most diverse borough of New York City and one of the areas hit hardest by the coronavirus pandemic — a phenomenon that has disproportionately affected black and brown communities across the country.

Townsend Harris has been no stranger to struggles with diversity and inclusion within its community. Just recently, alumnx took to Instagram to begin a [#NotMyTownsend campaign](#) that documented experiences, racist incidents, and sexual misconduct that happened during their time at the school. The student reporters at *The Classic* [investigated](#) the administration's silence on the matter, and it is conspicuous that the Alumni Association has also not responded. The pursuit of "inclusion of all" requires that this association do more than offer vague platitudes like "we must find, blaze and plan other paths forward for the betterment of society."

I urge you to take greater action than simply circulating this performative message, and apologize for the insensitive statement posted on Facebook and emailed to alumnx this morning. With an alumni association as large and influential as ours, the THAA should be directing the attention of alumnx to ways that they fight for justice and contribute to this movement themselves. Namely, THAA should be encouraging its network to donate to the numerous funds providing supplies and support to protesters seeking justice. See the links below as just a sample of where the Alumni Association can be directing funds.

To be clear, as an **[alumna/alumx/alumni]** of Townsend Harris I, along with others, ask that the THAA:

- Make a strong and committed statement of solidarity with Black Lives Matter and those protesting over the murder of George Floyd by Derek Chauvin. This statement must name the violence that Black communities are experiencing and have always experienced at the hands of police and white supremacy in this country.

- Commit to collecting donations for bail funds and mutual aid initiatives sustaining the essential work that is being done to fight for justice for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and many many others.
- Apologize for the insensitive statement posted this morning and commit to doing better.
- Respond to and support the voices of the alumx who have documented their experiences with racism, sexual assault and homophobia as a part of the #NotMyTownsend campaign.
- Make a plan for how Townsend Harris and the Alumni Association can and will support the [broader movement across the city to divest from the NYPD](#) and reinvest in our communities.
- Show and promote the important work [Townsend Harris alumni](#) are already doing in this field.

For the future, we demand that you put in the effort before publishing such a vague and poorly thought-out statement so that the work does not fall on Black alumx and others to point you in the right direction.

Thank you,
[Name]

Funds to donate to and uplift

[NourishNYC](#) provides direct material and financial support to NYC based activists.

<https://blacklivesmatters.carrd.co/#donate>

[National Bail Out](#) is a Black-led and Black-centered collective of abolitionist organizers, lawyers and activists building a community-based movement to support our folks and end systems of pretrial detention and ultimately mass incarceration.

[Support Reclaim the Block](#)'s work to make sure that our communities have the resources they need to thrive. Our grassroots group is up against the deep pockets of the Minneapolis police union, and we need your support.

[May/June MN Bail Fund and Support List \(Updated Daily\)](#)

[Split a donation between 70+ community bail funds, mutual aid funds, and racial justice organizers](#)

GoFundMe funds for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony Mcdade

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/georgefloyd>

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/9v4q2-justice-for-breonna-taylor>

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/in-memory-of-tony-mcdade>

Mutual Aid Initiatives

<https://mutualaid.nyc/get-involved/donate/>

<https://www.survivedandpunishedny.org/mutual-aid/>