

Dear Colby Community,

Recent events have highlighted the multifaceted and systemic nature of racism in the United States. But this injustice is not new. It is deeply ingrained in our institutional structures, including our educational and healthcare systems. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated these systematic inequalities, with our current health and economic crisis affecting BIPOC at a disproportionate rate.

Colby is not immune to these issues. Year after year, members of our community are harmed by racist incidents on this campus. While student leaders have worked hard in the past to address these issues, more needs to be done. A few weeks ago everyone on campus had the opportunity to receive a bracelet inscribed with ‘One Colby’ and ‘Hold the Hill’ at the testing center. Included with the bracelet was also a card that addressed the origins of this phrasing as well as the purpose of this [pledge](#).

“One Colby stands as a creed and an assertion that we will take responsibility for our actions and prioritize the greater good of the community before our own self-interests. We must strive to hold each other accountable, practice authentic allyship, support one another, and respect every member of our community.”

At the end of the statement, we asked each member of the community to consider their action plan: **“As we move forward, how will you embrace One Colby and Pledge to Hold the Hill?”**

While “One Colby” speaks volumes to the work that we have to do to stay on campus together during a pandemic, this message also aims to highlight its role in our anti-racist work. Since its creation by the Student Athletic Advisory Committee over the summer, One Colby has been rooted in addressing issues of systematic racism in this country. Now, SGA and SAAC are united in the goal of making the Colby community a welcoming place for all and addressing issues of structural and institutional racism on our campus and in our broader society. As “One Colby” implies, to engage in this work to the fullest extent, we must all work together and share the same commitment to this anti-racist mission. So, as you consider your role in this common pledge, we write to share the beginnings of how SGA and SAAC plan to tackle systemic racism through **educating ourselves, building meaningful connections, and holding each other accountable.**

Educate:

- Develop a recurring DEI training program for student leaders in consultation with the Pugh Center and the Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Club leaders and SGA members attended the first session at the beginning of the academic year, and programs will occur throughout the semesters.
- Develop a program to prepare student-athletes to actively work towards racial justice at Colby
- Collaborate with faculty and staff to develop a mandatory DEI curriculum for all students
- Organizing a virtual speaker from the athletics sphere to discuss social injustice, racism, allyship, and being a leader in athletics. Following this presentation, there will be required team discussions about how athletes can include these ideas into their everyday values, as well as how teams can incorporate them into their cultures.

Build Meaningful Connections

- Allocate additional funds from the SGA Budget to Pugh Center clubs to aid in inclusive programming
- Establish a DEI group of SAAC Executive Board members

Hold Each Other Accountable

- Work collaboratively as student leaders to ensure that we all make progress towards “One Colby.” Key student leaders from SGA, SPB, PCB, SAAC, and ARDs have begun meeting to coordinate our efforts.
- Implement bias evaluations and anti-racism surveys for student leaders and faculty
- Aid student clubs in creating constitutions and a DEI statement to be publicized on the official Colby Clubs website
- Require each SAAC Representative to sign a statement regarding our commitment to creating a united community that focuses on making Colby Athletics a safe space for all individuals and especially those of diverse backgrounds. Any failure to uphold this responsibility as a SAAC member will result in dismissal from the committee

A voice is only as powerful as those willing to use it. It means very little to say that Black Lives Matter if we do not commit ourselves to the work necessary to address issues of systemic racism. Clearly, we, as a community, have significant work ahead of us before we can claim to be “One Colby.” The actions listed above are not all of the ways in which SGA and SAAC members have pledged ourselves to this work, but rather show broad commitments in which we aspire to achieve. As you consider your part in our shared goal of making this a welcoming community for all and eliminating structural racism, remember that working together will enable us to make the most meaningful change.

Sincerely,

The Colby College Student Government Association and the Student-Athlete Advisory
Committee