



June 30, 2023

Dear fellow Antiochians,

Yesterday, the Supreme Court issued a ruling that effectively ends Affirmative Action in college admissions as we know it.

Today, Antioch remains steadfast in what we have always held dear: affirming the value of diversity in our community, upholding the dignity of every individual, and recognizing the real impact of structures of racism and other systems of inequity as an unavoidable American legacy.

In its ruling on the case brought by Students for Fair Admissions against Harvard University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Supreme Court declared the consideration of race in college admissions unconstitutional while noting that individuals remain free to address race in their application essays. The decision effectively overturned *Grutter vs. Bollinger* (2003), which permitted race as one factor in a holistic approach to admissions decisions and efforts to shape an overall incoming class. In turn, this further undermines the settled principle in the *University of California vs. Bakke* (1978) that recognized the educational value for all of a diverse classroom.

This decision is alarming, though not surprising. The immediate impact will be on elite, highly selective institutions where the access to power they afford is hotly contested. But the impact will be felt throughout higher education and, indeed, in national conversations about our core values. Most higher education institutions in the United States were not originally designed to educate marginalized groups—racialized communities, non-men, and economically disadvantaged families—instead, often perpetuating wealth and power across generations. Affirmative action served as a crucial acknowledgment of these deep-rooted disparities, attempting to rectify historical injustices.

We are reflecting on the dissent by the newest Justice, Ketanji Brown Jackson, who wrote, “Simply put, the race-blind admissions stance the Court mandates from this day forward is unmoored from critical real-life circumstances. Thus, the Court’s meddling not only arrests the noble generational project that America’s universities are attempting, but it also launches, in effect, a dismally misinformed sociological experiment.”

It is important to remember: the fight for equity and liberation is never a linear path. At places like Antioch, we must be clear-eyed in our values and efforts to create a world that works for everyone. We are proud of our small but remarkably diverse community – one of the most diverse liberal arts colleges in the nation across many dimensions of identity. We achieved this diversity through our values and a commitment to an accessible, practical liberal education, including removing barriers to historically excluded groups.

At Antioch, we are betting on the future by serving the needs of today's students: people of color, queer people, working-class families, transfer students, adult returners, neurodiverse people, and those who are the first in their families to go to college. Without each of us, Antioch would not be able to live up to our own values.

Now is the time to invest in a place like Antioch. Antiochians have always been changemakers. Let us fight for justice, remain steadfast in our pursuit of equality, and refuse to accept setbacks as permanent barriers to a more just and inclusive society.

Sincerely,

Shane Creepingbear, Dean of Admissions & Dean of Community and External Relations

Brian Norman, Provost

Jane Fernandes, President