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Council to shape reform efforts of UC Police

Cincinnati – The University of Cincinnati (UC) has established a Safety and Reform Community Advisory Council (CAC) to provide guidance on UC Police reform efforts following the July 19 officer-involved shooting death of Samuel DuBose. The CAC will be chaired by the Honorable Judge John A. West of the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas. West will work directly with UC’s Vice President for Safety and Reform, Robin Engel, PhD, and S. Gregory Baker, director of police community relations.

The CAC’s first meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. tonight at UC.

“The University of Cincinnati is committed to listening to all voices so that we can create an inclusive environment to foster educational growth,” said UC President Santa Ono. “Establishment of the CAC will allow the voices and diverse perspectives of all individuals to be heard and considered as we work with our community partners to move the city and university communities forward.”

“The goal of the CAC is to listen and restore trust within our community and develop UCPD into a national model for urban campuses,” said Engel. “Efforts to implement equitable and effective policing and rebuild relationships within our communities are critical. Development of the CAC is an extremely important milestone.”

The CAC will advise Engel on developing UCPD’s reform agenda as well as tracking its progress and communicating its impact. Additionally, the CAC will assist Baker in building, enhancing and expanding UCPD’s relationships on UC’s campus and in local communities.

“Members of the CAC are highly respected individuals and we are grateful they have agreed to share their expertise with us. We need guidance from all segments of the UC and Cincinnati communities to provide oversight and meaningful transformation,” added Gregory Baker.

Five core principles will guide the CAC’s work: transparency, legitimacy, fairness, collaboration and innovation.

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“CAC members represent many facets of the greater Cincinnati community and bring a wide array of talents and insight,” said Judge West. “The collective voice of this group will lead impactful and lasting change, not only between police and residents here in Cincinnati, but potentially between police departments and communities across the country. The work we are about to embark upon will be difficult and challenging, but also groundbreaking.”

Members of the CAC are:

- Eric Abercrumbie PhD, Executive Director, Diversity & Community Relations, UC
- Officer Doug Barge, UCPD Fraternal Order of Police
- Marcus Bethay, President, African American Alumni Affiliate
- Dejanay Drummonds, United Black Student Association, UC
- Mike Ealy, President, Corryville Community Council
- Margaret Fox, Executive Director, Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati
- Bishop Bobby Hilton, Senior Pastor, Word of Deliverance Ministries for the World
- Chara Fisher Jackson, Executive Director, Greater Cincinnati Urban League
- Doloris F. Learmonth, Esq, Dinsmore & Shohl LLP
- Jack Martin, CUF Neighborhood Association
- Janet Moore, Associate Professor, UC College of Law
- Andrew Naab, President, UC Student Government
- Clarence Newsome, PhD, President, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center
- James E. Schwab, President & CEO, Interact for Health
- Pastor KZ Smith, Senior Pastor, Corinthian Baptist Church of Cincinnati
- Pastor Ennis F. Tait, Overseer, Church of the Living God
- Captain Teresa Theetge, Cincinnati Police Department
- Charlene Ventura, President and CEO of the YWCA of Greater Cincinnati, Retired

Establishment of the CAC is the latest action taken by the university as part of its reform efforts. In July, the university proactively contracted with Kroll Inc., one of the nation’s leading investigative firms, to conduct a comprehensive, independent review of all UC police actions related to the July 19 shooting death of Dubose. Results of the report were released in September.

In August, UC hired a team of experts to lead safety and reform efforts. That same month UC Police implemented an Early Warning System, which is used to flag patterns of officer behavior, such as use of force, for review. Contact cards have also been implemented to track the gender and race of all pedestrian and traffic stops conducted by UC Police. In October, all UC Police officers received fair and impartial policing training. A presentation about the training and the science of bias was also held for community members.

In the coming months, the CAC will help identify an external team to conduct a top-to-bottom review of the UC Police Department’s policies, procedures and practices.

The CAC will meet monthly.

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