



## **CSSA Resolution Regarding Student of Color Safety and Justice for Josiah**

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**WHEREAS**, the California State Student Association (CSSA) is the single recognized voice of the 487,000 students in the California State University (CSU); and,

**WHEREAS**, CSSA and CSU students are concerned with the safety of students of color on and off CSU campuses; and,

**WHEREAS**, David Josiah (DJ) Lawson, Humboldt State University (HSU) sociology student, student of color, and member of campus group Brother's United, was a valued and loved member of the CSU system, the HSU campus and Arcata community; and,

**WHEREAS**, DJ's brutal murder at an off campus party in April of 2017 has caused much pain, anger, and fear in students across the CSU; and,

**WHEREAS**, Charmaine Lawson, DJ's mother, has been working tirelessly with students, staff and community members thinking of creative ways to create accountability for her son's murder, and ensure the safety of CSU students; and<sup>1</sup>,

**WHEREAS**, Humboldt County community members, HSU students and faculty, California Faculty Association (CFA) and Students for Quality Education (SQE) members have been dedicated to supporting Charmaine Lawson, the Justice for Josiah movement for months, and anti-racism work for years; and<sup>2</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.kqed.org/news/11699191/justice-for-josiah-rallies-on-csu-campuses-draw-attention-to-black-students-killing-in-2017>

<sup>2</sup> CSUboardoftrustees "Plenary Session – Sept 12, 2018" YouTube Video, 1:15:35. September 12, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydzB8AnObxQ;>  
<https://www.calfac.org/headline/cfa-supports-family-slain-humboldt-state-student-calls-csu-admin-better-protect-students;>  
[https://www.calfac.org/headline/cfa-addresses-trustees-use-funds-and-student-mental-health-and-safety;](https://www.calfac.org/headline/cfa-addresses-trustees-use-funds-and-student-mental-health-and-safety) <https://www.calfac.org/headline/cfa-trustees-seek-justice-josiah-better-protect-students-color;> <http://csusqe.org/justice-for-josiah/>

**WHEREAS**, much of the discussion around student of color safety has focused on community-campus relationships, which can be both positive and rewarding, and also dangerous for students and community members; and<sup>3</sup>,

**WHEREAS**, in March of 2018, the California Supreme Court ruled in REGENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA v. Katherine Rosen, that administration and police officers in California public universities have a heightened legal obligation to protect students from threats to their safety in campus sponsored events; and<sup>4</sup>,

**WHEREAS**, in addition, many students, faculty, community members, and staff have argued that universities should be more accountable for the safety of students of color both on and around campus borders, showing support for students, providing resources and education for maintaining safety; and<sup>5</sup>,

**WHEREAS**, students of color across CSU campuses experience violent racism daily in classrooms, campus common areas, community neighborhoods, shops, and public areas. Students of color have demanded that their experiences be heard as truth and a crisis which demands action immediately; and<sup>6</sup>,

**WHEREAS**, in the 2017 CSU Student Health Report which collected student surveys in 2016 where CSU students self-rated their experience in the areas of health, safety and security, violence, sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and more on CSU campuses<sup>7</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS**, the findings of the violence portion of the survey show that the “prevalence of being in physical fights was higher among males (6% vs. 4% overall), but being physically assaulted was twice as prevalent among non-binary and Black/African American and ‘Other’ students compared to other groups (5-7% vs. 3% overall, Tables 8-9). Prevalence of being verbally threatened was also higher among non-binary and ‘Other’ race/ethnicity students (20-25% vs. 15% overall.”; and,

**WHEREAS**, other findings in the executive summary from this report reveal “threats to health, wellness, and safety were most prevalent among students of color and students of non-binary gender.”; and,

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<sup>3</sup> CSUboardoftrustees “Plenary Session – Sept 12, 2018” YouTube Video, 1:15:35. September 12, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydzB8AnObxQ>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://caselaw.findlaw.com/ca-supreme-court/1892230.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/10/05/unsolved-murder-black-student-humboldt-state-raises-many-questions>;

<https://www.calfac.org/headline/cfa-trustees-seek-justice-josiah-better-protect-students-color>

<sup>6</sup> CSUboardoftrustees “Plenary Session – Nov 14, 2018” YouTube Video, 1:29:40. November 14, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55HbUnCpMdg>.

<sup>7</sup> Nazimi, Aydin. The California State University Student Health, Wellness, and Safety Report. Long Beach: California State University Office of the Chancellor, 2016.

**WHEREAS**, one of CSSA's 2018-2019 priorities is to enable access to housing, food, and wellness resources that promote overall student health and safety; and,

**WHEREAS**, another priority of CSSA for 2018-2019 is to ensure the academic success and holistic educational experience of *all* CSU students; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED**, CSSA supports the efforts of the Justice for Josiah campaign, sends our condolences to Charmaine Lawson for the death of her son as well as our appreciation for all of the work she has done in support of students in the CSU system; therefore be it also,

**RESOLVED**, CSSA calls for continued research into safety of students of color across the CSU, focusing on student testimonies and experiences; be it further,

**RESOLVED**, CSSA calls for increased accountability of CSU administration for the safety of students on and off campuses, that university officials should be transparent about racism, sexism, homophobia in communities to prospective students; be it further,

**RESOLVED**, CSSA requests that efforts to improve campus-community relationships and safety be implemented across the CSU system, with a student safety task force formed at each CSU. Each of the task forces would be focused around anti-racist work on and around the campus, while maintaining an intersectional lens; be it further,

**RESOLVED**, each task force shall be composed of CSU students, community members, faculty, staff, administration, along with executives. CFA and SQE should be invited to co-facilitate on each taskforce, where available, due to their strong basis in intersectional anti-racism work. This working group shall have a proportional number of all stakeholders named above; be it further,

**RESOLVED**, this working group shall be fully funded by the Chancellor's Office.

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**Joe Nino, Chair**  
Cal State Student Association Board of Directors

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Date

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**Mia Kagianis, President**  
Cal State Student Association

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Date