Opening Remarks – June 12 Series

Changing the Narrative: a Multi-Generational Approach

Welcome to the second UNT Dallas Responds series of focused conversations growing out of the recent civil unrest.

Our purpose here is to get beyond the platitudes, the conventional wisdom and work together to see a way forward for constructive action.

This conversation is entitled “Changing the Narrative: a multi-generational approach.”

This refers to the fact that five different generations populate our campus and each are important contributors to our success.

We are one university with a powerful mission to increase educational attainment in urban Metro Dallas. No other university is so local. No other university has made the strides UNT Dallas has in providing local students with a pathway into local careers at a living wage.

But our students don’t want to accept the status quo. They want to change the narrative by reshaping the world into something more just and equitable. A world where racism isn’t accepted. A world where it isn’t where you start out in life, it’s where you migrate to a world of equal opportunity to succeed and thrive.

To change the narrative, all of us have to get closer to the problems that exist in our society. To fix those problems we can’t become cynical. We have to work hard. And we get more done working together than working alone.

To foster this conversation, we turn to our distinguished leader in residence, Michael Williams, former commissioner of public education in Texas, and Nakia Douglas, our director of pre-collegiate programs. In his distinguished career, Mr. Douglas also founded the Barak Obama Male Leadership Academy.

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