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STANDING STRONG DURING UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

The past few weeks have been historic by many accounts. The West Chester University Graduate Social Work Department is proud of the many forms of social justice activism students, alumni, staff and faculty have engaged in during these unprecedented times.

The NASW Code of Ethics (2008) is clear in that all social workers, regardless of NASW membership status, political affiliation or practice setting must “promote the general welfare of society from local to global levels...and should promote social, economic, political and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice”(6.01). Our Code of Ethics further mandates that social workers “engage in social and political action”(6.04a), “act to expand choice and opportunity for all people” (6.04b), “promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity” (6.04c), and “act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against any person, group, or class” (6.04d). As social workers we are advocates for any and all vulnerable and oppressed persons. Now, more than ever, the country, and the world, needs social workers to promote our core values and the realization of human rights for all.

To our students who identify with a community which has been targeted by recent national policies or events, we say to you: We hear you, we see you, we honor you, and we are here for you. Please know that Graduate Social Work faculty and staff are available to meet with students and alumni to talk, brainstorm, or just sit in community together. We recognize that for some it is easy to hide certain identities, but other identities are not (and should not have to be) easily concealed. The color of one’s skin, one’s gender, one’s hijab should be a source of pride, not a target. Stand together as Social Workers, and more importantly as humans, to protect and heal each other from hate and bigotry.

We cannot deny that Social Work is a political profession. Now is the time to embrace that part of our identity and stand strong in our convictions that social justice and human rights are for all.

Please see the NASW statement on the recent immigration executive order:

<http://www.socialworkblog.org/advocacy/2017/01/nasw-statement-president-trumps-immigration-executive-order-is-inhumane-de-facto-ban-on-muslim-immigrants/>