

Symbolic Declaration of Interdependence

The I-We Day Participants of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, committed to *Lux Libertas* and *Esse Quam Videri* reaffirm these truths:

- That human development is informed by historical, socio-cultural and geopolitical contexts and conditions, underscored by privileges and penalties associated with race, class and gender, ethnicity, caste and culture, sexuality, creed and color, language, appearance and ability;
- That to promote peace and well-being by viewing our diversity with lenses of equity and social justice is both a democratic right and a democratic responsibility of faculty, staff and students;
- That the arc of history bends toward justice only when we find the courage and strength to push in unison;
- That since no representative of any diverse campus body owns the whole *truth*, it is imperative to listen actively and think with critical reflexivity across our differences;
- That it is honorable to lean forward across our differences toward deepened sympathy and widened understanding with a commitment to learning how our rights and responsibilities bind us;
- That interdependence is the steward of an intercultural campus;
- That robust social science reminds us that when acting in unison with clear, agreed-upon goals, our diverse groups are more creative, innovative and better prepared to anticipate alternative perspectives and thereby, more likely to outperform non-diverse groups when solving complex problems.

Therefore, we resolve and invite everyone:

- To act in unison to uphold, promote, engage and sustain respectful co-equal partnerships;
- To act in unison to maintain the dignity of our humanity and to safeguard this dignity across real and perceived differences, above and beyond justice for just us mentalities;
- To act in unison with a loving and collaborative spirit to address past, present and future anxiety and animosity emerging from our differences, and to unite ourselves in campus life, liberty, happiness and the pursuit of equity and excellence.

With roots in democratic freedom, bound by the call of our great public university of the people, willing to share our triumphs and yet, willing to shed our Carolina blue blood together in times of trial; we declare that all Tar Heels are created equal and that interdependence is the price and prize of liberty and justice for our beloved community.

By Dr. Sherick Hughes