

June 9, 2020

Jill Muti  
Head of School  
Ashley Hall School  
172 Rutledge Ave  
Charleston, SC 29403

Dear Head of School Muti, faculty, staff, and the wider Ashley Hall community, We, the PQV Action Network (PAN), are a group of committed, diverse, and aligned alumnae who seek to bring true equity, diversity, and inclusion to Ashley Hall. While we acknowledge without Ashley Hall we would not be the esteemed and successful womxn we are today, there is still much work to be done to affect structural change and culture shift, leading to true equality among all students. Black students and students of color, no matter their socio-economic background, face insurmountable barriers, continue to be marginalized and are not given the same space or opportunities as all students at the school.

We applaud Ashley Hall's progress in introducing feminist theory in the humanities, providing coursework in racial equity, and the creation of affiliated student-led societies. However, given that Ashley Hall's history mirrors Charleston's own central history in slavery and civil rights, negative and positive, the school has not yet undertaken all necessary steps to listen and provide solutions to Black students. Because we deeply care about providing current and future students with equal opportunity, that must change. PAN stands to help make Ashley Hall fulfill its mission of Possunt Quae Volunt to include and prepare students to be global ambassadors of Ashley Hall as they enter higher education and the professional world that awaits them.

### 1. Motto and Mission

**Motto:** "Speaking truth to power for Black students and students of color to ensure all girls who have the will have the ability."

**Mission:** To create a just, accountable, and equitable learning space for Black students and students of color at Ashley Hall through educational initiatives, mentorship, and alumnae engagement. Furthermore, PAN will ensure that these initiatives will serve as a core part of Ashley Hall's culture to ready all students to engage globally and critically on important issues that affect all womxn.

### 2. Core Principle

- Racial, cultural, and religious equity for all students.
  - An alumnae organization of Black womxn, womxn of color, and White allies whose dedication to the school expects Ashley Hall to use its resources for good to provide all students a safe and loving space to grow.

### 3. Collaborative Actions and Goals

- Ashley Hall must incorporate a Diversity and Inclusion statement as a core and permanent part of Ashley Hall's mission and honor code.
- Ashley Hall must, in recognition that Black Lives Matter, immediately state their support for unequivocally for the Black Lives Matter movement and their Black students and students of color, and formally recognize PAN as an alumnae organization.

- Ashley Hall must hire a Director of Diversity and Inclusion in addition to diversifying their hiring of faculty and staff. The Director of Diversity and Inclusion reports to the Head of School.
- PAN will establish a formal, independent alumnae advisory and oversight board in collaboration with a Director of Diversity and Inclusion to put forth solutions for racial equity in Upper and Lower Schools. The oversight board's work and proposals would be funded by the school.
- Ashley Hall must make the Racial Equity and Race and Gender classes mandatory graduation requirements. Further curriculum on US History, Global Studies, and ethnic studies, including African Studies, Indigenous Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Latinx Studies, and Asian-Pacific Islander Studies to decolonize the curriculum and correct historical erasures that are the result of Eurocentrism. The curriculum cannot remain a White space.
- Ashley Hall must further curriculum overhaul to address Charleston's role in the transatlantic slave trade, Jim Crow, and Native American oppression. This includes annual field trips that enrich students' understanding of local histories such as the Charleston African American Museum, the Old Slave Mart Museum, and the "Gullah Tour" led by Gullah expert, author and academic Alphonso Brown that relates the rich Gullah and Black contributions to the Lowcountry and American history.
- Ashley Hall must consistently celebrate alumnae of color, particularly Black alumnae, and faculty who have made history/made positive impacts on the school.
- Ashley Hall must publicly acknowledge Ashley Hall's history of anti-Blackness and the role the school has played in holding up systems of white supremacy (ex: Kidnap tradition), knowing that this is the first step towards healing.
- Ashley Hall must require teacher training on how to respond to racialized conflict, how to reduce harm, and how to address the harm inflicted on students and colleagues. Training would be based on culturally responsive conflict management like mediation and trauma-informed pedagogy.
- Ashley Hall must acknowledge and allow all students to equally observe religious holidays including Jewish, Islamic, Christian, and other religious traditions without tardy or absence marks.
- Ashley Hall must formally recognize the creation under PAN of a Black Alumnae Association, an Asian-Pacific Islander Alumnae Association, and a Latinx Alumnae Association to partner and mentor students for internships, Senior Thesis, and professional development. These associations would also partner and protect the Multicultural Student Union.
- Ashley Hall must ensure languages taught at the school including Classics, Spanish, and French also teach a comprehensive history of its origins including the former colonies in which these languages are spoken today.

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- Ashley Hall must broaden the scope of PAN's allyship in the long-term that intersects with minority groups like the LGBTQ+ community and collaborate with the Spectrum Society.
- Ashley Hall must recognize PAN as a formal, but an independent organization in partnership with the Alumnae Association. Ashley Hall must be transparent and regularly inform (as part of marketing materials, such as Perspectives) alumnae and parents of their equity work.

Because these measures, in addition to a zero-tolerance policy, have not been enforced Ashley Hall has lost thousands and potentially millions of dollars in alumnae donations and engagement by ignoring its alumnae and students who are Black, Indigenous and of color. If each and every collaborative is taken, we will be supportive and open to give to our school in recognition of its outstanding growth and work to make Ashley Hall a more equitable, safe space for all students and prepare them in the spirit of PQV.

We ask that you respond to our letter in a manner of transparency to the wider Ashley Hall community via public communications to preserve the spirit of PQV and to inform.

We look forward to working with you to make Ashley Hall and our world a better and just place for all.

Sincerely,

PQV Action Network

\* As of June 22, 2020, signatures continue to be collected. These are the confirmed signatures of supportive alumnae, parents of alumnae, former students and former faculty affirming this letter.

Tiffany Dayemo '11  
Rebecca (Becca) Blank '10  
Miller Bianucci '11  
Kharynton Beggs '19  
Lauren DeHaven '08  
Kariesha Drayton '07  
Colleen Burrows '14  
Lauren Smith '10  
Laura McGuinn '11  
Margaret Quinn '19  
Ansley Roberts '11  
Narni Summerall '13  
Plum Champlin '19  
Leila Stricker '08  
Mattison Matthews '19  
Mina Rismani '14  
Taylor McClarty '16  
Teia Beggs (parent of an alumna)  
Makenzie Collins '10

Paris Evans '10  
Giselle Libby '16  
Charlotte Basala '16  
Spencer George '16  
Shannon Laribo '11  
Pearce Buxton '19  
Nicole Eyraud '17  
Kaetlin Collins '09  
Rebecca Rosen '11  
Rebecca Howell '13  
Walker Buxton '85  
Masheed K Rockwell '02  
Elizabeth Harrigan Lesko '10  
Charlotte Gable '11  
Walker Buxton '13  
Sarah Tidwell, '16  
Colleen Leung '11  
Courtleigh Watson '08  
Grayson Frizzelle '14

Meaghan Bonds '18  
Courtney Canton '13  
Colbert Tew '08  
Kelly Smith (Former Faculty)  
Shira Cohen '12  
Isabelle Luzuriaga '12  
Brenyce Watson '13  
India Madisetti '14  
Macon Bianucci '13  
Elizabeth Dugger '19  
Madeleine Frizzelle '15  
Robyn Do '11  
Sydney Crews '16  
Sarah Pritchard '16  
Donya Amer '11  
Isabella Alfaro '14  
Annie Lee McLaurin '16  
Abby Grady '10

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Rossi Anastopoulo '13  
Imani Walker '13  
Naseem Keshmirian '08  
Halle Lipov '14  
Alexandra des Francs '13  
Hayley Daen '10  
Jennet Robinson Alterman '70  
Paula Sommerville '14  
Charly Banks '10  
Lauren Marshall '17  
Alida Sinkler '16  
Sarah Halpern '08  
Caroline Gregorie '12  
India McCarty '16  
Stephanie Harth '07  
Ashley Holt '08  
Eliza Tew '10  
Samantha Fisher '07  
B Robbins '17  
Casi (Grady) Cannarella '08  
Adeline English Rawl '13  
Anne Lee (Parent)  
Megan Clore '10  
Haleigh Foster '11  
Kristi Dayemo '14  
Cailly Danahy '16  
Katherine L Hefner '10  
Charlotte Walpole '10  
Sara Ravenel '14  
Candice Drayton '19  
Sally Sheppard '11  
Betsy Cribb '11  
Kathryn Crawford '07  
Anne Ferris Yanney '09  
Ann Elizabeth Kulze '07  
Katharina Koch '12  
Catharine Gregorie '07  
Sally Walker '10  
Ashley Davoli '09  
Lynna Durst, '11 attended 03' -'07  
Melanie du Mont '11, attended '05-'07  
Kate Brooks '17  
Whitney Duc '08  
Sallie Blackmer Chamberlain '12  
Laighton Cain '15  
Ellen Hudson Brown Howard '12  
Melissa Fuller Brown '83  
Caroline Howell '08

Caroline Pires Day '10 (former student)  
Susan Miller Bianucci  
Laura Duc Russell '02  
Lauren Luciano '09  
Lilla Lane Clark '01  
Amelia White '10  
Caroline Ravenel '10  
Harlan Taylor '17  
Elizabeth Cameron Smith '15  
Ann Hill '12  
Natalie Swanson '14  
Helen Smythe '12  
Ann Hill '12  
Mary Macrae Chapman '10  
Aliyah C. Simmons '15  
Ann Reese  
Tayla Edwards '12  
Helen Smythe '12  
Melanie Weintraub '15  
Meredith Noble '15  
Caroline Bevon '18  
Rebecca Ackerman '18  
Alexandra Kerrison '14  
Virginia Wallace '15  
Caroline Kerrison '16  
Michaela White '14  
Catherine Griesedieck '14  
Charlotte Winckler '14  
Anne Marks Jones '86  
Sallie Hutson '13  
Marie Fogle '10  
Sarah Brams '14  
Eliza Quinn '17  
Jessica McDowell Painter '13  
Maggie Mallard '09  
Claudia Driggers '16  
Hannah Poulnot '11  
Emily Clarke '18  
Kathryn Hatcher '06  
Sara Mac Swanson '12  
Rhett Bissell '11  
Lauren Rovick '08  
Elizabeth C. Ouzts '17  
Annie Reese '12  
Lindsay Booth '12  
Margaret O'Shaughnessy '12  
Waverly Kremer '20  
Sarah White Evans '06

Maggie Nevers '12  
Jennifer Lewis '08  
Catherine Dixon '19  
Parent of Lauren DeHaven '08  
Dalya Amer '14  
Anne Quattlebaum '88  
Anna Hildebrand '17  
Alexandria Condon '12  
Litsa Darby '12  
Natalie Smith '18  
Ruby Baxley '19  
Lili Gregorie '16  
Lizzy Ott '10  
Rachel Ellyn '09  
Emily Clarke '18  
Sarah Norvell '10  
Beth Pilcher, '06  
Katrina Armstrong '08  
Gail Townsend Bailey '63  
Virginia Wallace '15  
Sonny June Way '17  
Tory Corless '09  
Jamie Harrell Rowell '10  
Legare Sinkler '15  
Calvin Jules Swanson '12  
Katherine Morrison '09  
Kathryn Romaine Crawford '07  
Ashley Jackson '08  
Maela Singh '14  
Jennie Engel Kooden '08  
Jessica Harrell '14  
Jessica Schnorr '14  
Katie Pérez-Phillips '07  
Lydia Robins Hendrix '05  
Leslie Sawyer (née Steinert) '92  
Nicole Holmes Mihalas '92  
Caroline Lowery '12  
Terry Fisher, Former Board Member  
Rosalie Alterman '15  
Lily Alterman '13  
Elizabeth Dougherty '10  
Erin Marsland '18  
Susie Robinson '08  
Erin Goedecke '17  
Sarah Kuniansky '05  
Arden Hare McKenzie '09  
Caroline Spelman '11  
Maddie Hayes '14

Christine White Statz '05  
Meg McElwaine '20  
Rachel Clore '08  
Mae Rose Naylor '14  
Rebecca Forman (former student)  
Trish McGuinn (Parent)  
Erin Forte Churchill '11  
Ayla Hyman '10  
Harriett Steinert. Parent  
Chloe Plunkett '11  
Sarah Eustis '16  
Olivia Hipp '10  
Melissa Muller  
Dee Heffernan '01  
Catherine Doscher Byrd '77  
Amelia Spitznagel '12  
Cecelia Worthington '08 (Former Student)  
Hannah Weatherford Howe '07  
Morgan Lee '16  
Peter Naylor (Parent)  
Nathalie Naylor (Parent)  
Marsha Alterman  
Jan Lipov (Parent)  
Reese Terry '20  
Jeanna Watson (Parent)  
Elizabeth Sinkler '85  
Amy Bower  
Elizabeth Sinkler '85  
Mary (Gray) Griffen '19  
Madeline Leadem '14  
Brooke McGrath '11 (former student)  
Savannah Dixon '13 (former student)  
Jacqueline Baker '14  
Polly Walton Buxton '86  
Hannah Méndez '17  
Auburn Jeffries '16  
Leah Fisher '05  
Celeste Babb Laribo (Parent)  
Shann L. Laribo (Parent)  
Júlia Dias '11 (former student)  
Lana Kleiman  
Claire Christensen (faculty)  
Caroline Hecker '05  
Cíará Staveley-O'Carroll '15  
Katherine Anderson '03  
Naimah German '03  
Margaret Scott '03  
Maureen Bell '03

Eliza Barrett '14  
Avery Saunders '15  
Margaret Smith Garbe '60  
Daisy Stackpole '13  
Caroline Boinest '11  
Brooke McGrath ('05-'06)  
Bess Rosen '07  
Sarah Elizabeth Field '05  
Maddie Schutte '17  
Henri Bianucci (Parent)  
Emma Baker '08  
Rebecca Grantham Zaro '03  
Emma Wannamaker '14  
Robin Garner (former faculty)  
Elizabeth Gaillard Bailey '96  
Ellie Prause '05  
Marsha Alterman  
Tracee Coaxum Coleman '92  
LaRonda Peterson '92  
Susannah Darby  
Anne Tilghman Reiss '92  
Ashby Bland '16  
Abigail Hamilton '18  
Audrey Hamilton '16  
Rebecca A. Stone-Danahy, (Former Faculty and Parent)  
Arden Small '63  
Karolyn Brown '16  
Sarah Mcpherson '14  
Josephine Townsend Willis '92  
Danielle A. Feerst, '12  
Emily-Elise Martin '96  
Maxine Smith, Ed.D. (Former Board Member and Parent)  
Kathryn Hayes Moore '96  
Anne Stavrinakis '96  
Claire Cohen '96  
Lucie Maguire Kramer '96  
Nicola Leventhal Greene '96  
Monica Hammonds '76  
Margaret Lee McEaddy Moniz '03  
Caroline Hill '19  
Zuri Turner '11 (former student)  
Shandon Klein '03  
Tanishah Nellom '03  
Johanna Wezwick '03  
Diane L. Carroll '04  
Elizabeth Allen Daniel '03  
Elizabeth Lilly Meagher '03  
Lydia Levinson '03

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Eleanor Sargent Tucker '03  
Katherine Bakker '03  
Kendall Robertson Fleming '03

## CALL TO ACTION

*PQV Action Network (PAN) recognizes that over the past few years there have been steps taken toward equity at Ashley Hall. We believe the school's work has laid a foundation for initiatives that can truly be effective in creating and sustaining a culture of belongingness, equity, and inclusivity for BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color) students and thus for all students. Though we applaud Ashley Hall's efforts, we expect the following changes to occur by **Spring 2025** in order to ensure Ashley Hall is dedicated to the social/emotional education of all students. Many of these expectations are also outlined in our letter to you.*

*Therefore, the PQV Action Network calls Ashley Hall to take action in the following ways:*

Whereas Ashley Hall has published a statement on the current climate due to COVID-19 and the unacceptable murders of black men and women by the hands of the police, PAN calls for Ashley Hall to also prepare and publish a statement of institutional dedication to their BIPOC students and to make a public statement on their role and history of perpetuating systemic racism.

Whereas Ashley Hall has offered the senior elective course, 'race, class, and gender,' PAN calls for Ashley Hall to establish 'race, class, and gender' or a similar racial equity course as a graduation requirement.

Whereas Ashley Hall has established a global studies committee to expand global education and to establish a rubric and audit of the curriculum from EEC through twelfth grade, PAN calls for this work to first be informed by experts in culturally responsive pedagogy and then be supported by an appointed Director of Diversity, so that the responsibility of curriculum reform does not rely solely on the Director of Global Studies and faculty.

Whereas Ashley Hall has encouraged or required faculty and staff to attend the Racial Equity Institute last year, PAN calls for Ashley Hall to partner with experts and provide mandatory, in-depth racial equity and mediation training for faculty and staff. This should include regular follow-ups for debriefing and reflection.

Whereas Ashley Hall does hire faculty and staff of color, PAN calls for Ashley Hall to hire educators of color to make up at least forty percent of all faculty and staff at equal pay.

Whereas Ashley Hall has some scholarships serving BIPOC students, PAN calls for Ashley Hall to fundraise for additional BIPOC scholarships, advertise these scholarships to BIPOC communities, and establish a support structure and safe spaces for these students as part of the work of the Director of Diversity.

Whereas Ashley Hall has supported and allowed for the creation of a Multicultural Student Union and the Spectrum Society, PAN calls for Ashley Hall to encourage and approve the creation of student-led affinity groups for all students who belong to a group that has been historically marginalized.

*\*Please note that this is a working document established to acknowledge Ashley Hall's current work toward equity and to advise Ashley Hall on immediate next steps to ensure thoughtfulness and sustainability. As an oversight board, PAN plans to review this working document at least annually to address improvements and to suggest additional steps to keep Ashley Hall moving forward.*

## **ADDENDUM**

June 11, 2020

We do not discourage alumnae and families from donating to Ashley Hall as we work with the board and the administration to ensure that these collaboratives are taken. Rather, we ask that if they wish to give to the school, they do so in explicit support of PAN's efforts.