

# *From the Office of the President*

**SOUTHWEST**  
TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Dear Southwest Family,

Yesterday, January 26, 2023, the five former Memphis Police Department officers involved in the incident that resulted in the death of Tyre Nichols were charged with several crimes, including second-degree murder. Later today, video footage of the altercation will be released to the public. This video has been described by those who have seen it as “horrific,” depicting “acts that defy humanity.” We commend Memphis Police Department Chief Cerelyn “C.J.” Davis for her swift actions in terminating the police officers. Her actions demonstrated that MPD will not tolerate such abuse of power by those who are sworn to protect our citizenry. No one should die from a traffic stop.

Our sincere condolences go out to the Nichols’ family and their loved ones. We know that neither the firings of the five officers involved, the charges brought against them, nor eventual trials will serve to heal the immense trauma carried by his family, loved ones, or our community as a whole. And, when the video footage is released, we can expect many to feel what the Nichols family feels – sorrow and outrage at the disregard of basic human rights.

Southwest joins the call for accountability in Nichols’ death. The reality is that Tyre’s death is a grave injustice reflective of the society we live in, a reality that disproportionately impacts African Americans. Southwest is committed to living out our mission and values of equity, inclusion and diversity in all that we do. We stand united as transformational agents of change in removing barriers and providing opportunities for students to succeed in life. We uphold the moral obligation to examine our thoughts and actions and work toward making our institution and the communities we serve as places where peace, justice and hope for a promising tomorrow prevail.

Southwest is a caring community. We understand that many will exercise their first amendment rights to protest, to demand action and results now and in the days ahead. We ask you to please honor the wishes of Tyre Nichols’ mother, and do so peacefully. Southwest will join our city leaders to bring hope and healing to our community. For those of you who may wish to talk through this with someone else, we are here for you. Please don’t hesitate to contact one of the college’s two counselors by emailing [counseling@southwest.tn.edu](mailto:counseling@southwest.tn.edu).

As the community’s college, our role is not to turn a blind eye to the social issues that impact our community. In the coming week, the college will provide opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to come together for conversations about Nichols’ death and issues of social injustice. We will share additional information about these opportunities as soon as plans are finalized. We welcome your thoughts on how we as a campus community can support the Nichols family, each other, and the city. If you have ideas, please share them with our Director of Student Development, Mr. Phoenix Worthy, by emailing [studentdevelopment@southwest.tn.edu](mailto:studentdevelopment@southwest.tn.edu).

Please stay safe and be well,

Dr. Tracy D. Hall, President