

Office of the President

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To: *Jason Erik Washington Art Committee members:*
Patricia Schechter (chair)
Victoria Calderon
Pedro Ferbel-Azcarate
Jaymee Jacoby
Deena Sajitharan
Cindy Starke
Ed Washington
Kayla Washington
Teresa Niedermeyer (staff)

From: President Stephen Percy

Re: Response to Committee Report

I want to express my deep gratitude for your hard work and commitment over the past year, and for the thoughtfully crafted report you provided me. I'm well aware that this work demanded not just your time and effort, but also a willingness to engage in critical thought and discussion about issues that challenge us all. This work is emotionally heavy, and I thank you all for taking on that burden. I must especially express my thanks to Ms. Kayla Washington, for whom this work must have been especially difficult. I very much appreciate having Kayla Washington serve on the important committee so that the Washington family is directly involved as we move forward with this important work.

As you articulated so well in your report, we must reckon with the fact that the tragic death of Jason Erik Washington will always be a part of PSU, now and into the future. As we conceive this art installation, we hope to acknowledge and accept that "none of this 'ends' but instead actively builds relationships and understanding into the future."

To that end, and in direct appreciation of the recommendations the Committee has made to me, I make the following commitments to each of you and to the PSU community:

- I will support an art installation that encourages contemplation and remembrance of the life that was taken far too soon, that of Jason Erik Washington;
- I will dedicate no less than \$25,000 of PSU funds to the development of this art for installation during the 2022/23 academic year and up to \$25,000 additional funds to support installation of the artistic creation likely to occur in the 2023/24 academic year.
- I will, under my authority as president of PSU, waive any terms of the settlement agreement between PSU and the Washington family that in any way limit the memorialization and accountability process related to the art installation;

- I will identify and commission a Steering Team to help guide and support the creation of an art installation during the 2022/23 academic year;
- The University will issue a formal solicitation in the fall of 2022 for an artist to conceive, develop and create an art installation that is a sensitive and vivid biographical treatment of the life of Jason Erik Washington;
- I will require that the art installation be developed under the guidance and support of the steering committee and informed by the recommendations articulated in your report; and
- I will encourage the artist to engage with the Washington family and create an installation that includes at least some of the elements amenable to revision and updating.

As you are certainly aware, this academic year will be my final year as president of PSU. I consider it my great honor and an indelible piece of my legacy to publicly acknowledge and take accountability for our country's history of race-based violence. The Jason Erik Washington memorial art installation will be a permanent embodiment of PSU's accountability and ongoing commitment to racial justice.

Again, I am grateful for your work on this important project, and I hope you will remain involved and invested as we move forward.