

Dear members of the Price community,

It is now three days since the election; for many of us, these days have been challenging, filled with uncertainty and even fear for our future. The ugliness that marked this election cycle has served to demonstrate the stark and visceral divisions between us; in the immediate aftermath, we cannot help but wonder if our country can ever begin to heal the deep wounds this election has wrought.

We know that in American politics, presidential elections are hard-fought. It's built into the nature of our political system that competing parties have different perspectives, different understanding of issues, and different approaches to the practice of governance. We expect strong disagreement, vigorous debate, and we have an expectation that each candidate will make their best case that they should be elected to lead our country.

In this election, there were key policy differences, including economic development, the decline of the middle class, growing inequality in the country, the environment and immigration.

While these are key policy issues facing the country, this election was different. The campaign broke every rule of public discourse and shattered every expectation of how presidential campaigns should be run. Any effort to have substantive discussion of policy was lost in an endless miasma of mudslinging, caustic rhetoric and the apparent disregard for the basic American values of diversity, fairness and inclusiveness.

Given the nature of this campaign, many of us in the Price community have grappled with strong feelings over the past three days, and I am keenly aware of the fears and concerns that have been expressed in our classrooms and corridors and across the entire campus.

While we cannot possibly know how the consequences of this election may play out in the next few months or years, there are some things we as a community can know with great certainty, and I want to share those with you.

We are a School that is deeply committed to our mission to improve the quality of life for people and their communities, here and abroad. That is the work we are called to do, and you can expect us as to be as vigorous and vigilant as ever in fulfilling that mission. We are committed to graduating students, no matter their academic discipline, who are instilled with a sense of public service and commitment to their communities, whether they work in the public, nonprofit or private sector.

We will continue to be a strong voice in the policy arena, providing the research and expertise for analytical, evidence-based policies that address the needs of all people in our communities, and we will work with political leaders and legislators from both sides of the aisle to achieve that goal.

We will also work to improve governance processes at the local, state and national level to ensure that the underrepresented are represented, and that the government and private sector work

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together efficiently and effectively for the benefit of everyone in our communities.

A commitment to social justice is implicit in the Price School mission, and we will continue to be tireless advocates for openness and inclusion, working to ensure that every voice is represented in the decisions that affect our communities and nation.

And finally, we are a School and a community that finds strength in the open expression of our diversity, where every member of our community is valued. Please also know the Price School will always be a place where clear, honest dialogue about differences in perspective, opinion and experience are welcomed, respected and embraced.

While we cannot control what happens in Washington, I do believe our mission calls us to help rebind the broken fabric of our society. It is my deepest wish that we as a School and as a community can and will serve as a model of character, civility and citizenship in a country that seems fractured and broken.

In times of uncertainty, we can find strength and renewed purpose in coming together. I would like to invite all of you to an open conversation on the implications of the election next Tuesday, November 16, from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm in RGL 209. We will provide food and drink, and a space for any of us who wish to share concerns, fears or ideas about ways to move forward.

I look forward to seeing you there, and to continuing to stand with each of you in the great work we have chosen to take on together.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Knott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jack" being more prominent than the last name "Knott".

Jack Knott

Dean

P.S. Many of you saw the Provost's message sent out yesterday, and I want to reiterate that at USC, all incidents of bias, hate crimes and hate incidents are considered a serious breach of our community expectations and need to be reported to allow for appropriate investigation and response. If you experience an incident at Price, please contact our student affairs office immediately or you can file a report online at:

[https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report/index.php/pid811364](https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid811364)