Dear Northwestern University School of Law Community,

The Student Bar Association (SBA) is the elected representative of the student body of Northwestern University School of Law.

We express our deep disappointment with the results of the recent grand jury decisions in the Michael Brown and Eric Garner cases. We recognize that the issue of inequality in our criminal justice system has plagued our society long before the tragic deaths of Mr. Brown and Mr. Garner. Inequality in the justice system has been present since its inception. Being law students puts us in a unique position to recognize when the justice system has failed. The Northwestern University School of Law SBA firmly believes that the justice system has failed.

The issue of inequality and injustice is deeper than these recent grand jury decisions. There has long been a clear and recognizable pattern of discrimination, not only in our justice system, but in our society as well. The society we live in is accustomed to the marginalization of various groups of people. That is the status quo. For example, the death penalty, in those states that still practice it, is overwhelmingly more likely to be given if the victim was White – a stark illustration of the different value our justice system places on different lives.

The past few weeks have highlighted that the masses are no longer satisfied with the status quo. People have seen these events one too many times, and will no longer passively hope that the system will work out its flaws on its own. People have taken to the streets to voice their frustration with the inequality that is written between the lines of every facet of our justice system. The Northwestern Law SBA stands in solidarity with those protestors.

We stand with all people facing injustice. We stand with all people facing marginalization. We stand with all people who are not viewed as equal in the eyes of the law, no matter what country they live in. From Oakland, to Chicago, to Ferguson, to New York, to countries around the world, the Northwestern Law SBA stands with you, with our hands up.

Great leaders have come before us, to allow us to stand on their shoulders and demand an end to discrimination and an end to oppression. We are proud to
attend the university that graduated the first female law student in the country, a university whose Bluhm Legal Clinic played a role in abolishing the death penalty in Illinois, and a university that last century welcomed Black law students from their segregationist home states, students who went on to do great things for their communities. Let us continue to be on the forefront, and leverage the unique position we are in as law students to effect change. Let us stand together against injustice, against discrimination, and against oppression in all cities, in all states, and in all countries.

The Northwestern Law Student Bar Association stands with their hands up.

In Solidarity,

Ghassan Shamieh- President
Sid Ray- Vice President
Brian Cox- Treasurer
Kevin Sanders- Secretary