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### Statement from The University of New Mexico Football Student-Athletes

The University of New Mexico Football Student-Athletes

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FOOTBALL / AUGUST 28, 2020

# A Statement from The University of New Mexico Football Student-Athletes

We live in a nation built upon the rule of law and justice for all; this is supposedly the very foundation that our country was built upon. However, that very same nation that we call home is plagued with disparity amongst its own citizens and injustices that touch every single corner of this land.

We, the players, of The University of New Mexico football team vehemently condemn the words of one of our most renowned and respected alumni, Brian Urlacher. As players and representatives of The University of New Mexico, we are asked to behave in a manner that is not detrimental to the reputation of our esteemed university; the moment we committed to this school, we understood the weight and the spotlight that would follow us throughout the rest of our lives. When you have a platform, you also have the responsibility and an obligation to use it wisely and respectfully; especially when you are the face of multiple sports organizations. As one of our own we look forward to the opportunity to sit down and discuss the comment Brian posted and why it was hurtful to us.

Throwing touchdowns and breaking tackles are great, but they are aspects of a game that we play. Just like Brian Urlacher and so many others, we will one day no longer be athletes. There will come a time when we will no longer lace up our cleats; when we will no longer tighten up our shoulder pads, buckle up our chin straps, and charge the football field. However, some of us will always carry with us the color of our skin and the weight that comes along with that burden. We cannot change the way we look, nor should we have to. But, we all have an obligation to change the way we see the world; this starts with reeducating the ignorant and reevaluating our own biases and prejudices.

**"We are The University of New Mexico football team and we will always fight ignorance and hatred with empowerment and unity."**

---The University of New Mexico Football Student-Athletes

During the current racial and political climate that exists, there was another black man whose body became a practice target in front of his own children; a man who could have been restrained without being shot in the back seven times by the very same people who took an oath to protect us. These issues are more significant than any NBA or NFL game/player. Our lives are not a game. We are not pawns that exist solely to entertain the masses. We are loving, caring, people with diverse upbringings and backgrounds. Some of us are no different from you in many ways; we just happen to be a different skin color. However, that difference should not be the difference between being restrained and being shot seven times.

Regardless of someone's criminal background or prior mistakes in life, we all deserve justice and equality; Lady Justice wears a blindfold, because justice is not intended to be subjective in America. Let us continue to hold each other, and this nation, accountable in every way that we can. Let us remember that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Regardless of who you are or your relation to this football team, we will no longer tolerate hatred and blatant ignorance directed towards the very existence of so many on this team. We will always stand unified and we will march far across the river towards justice together. We are The University of New Mexico football team and we will always fight ignorance and hatred with empowerment and unity.



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