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Bringing my unique background and skill set to the conversation is how I live justice at Loyola. Before beginning graduate studies in the Pastoral Counseling Department at Loyola, I developed many connections and gained experience working with a racial reconciliation team for several years. When my experience in racial reconciliation combined with my developing academic competencies, the opportunity arose to make a meaningful contribution to race relations and potentially drive national policy through empirical research. With the support of a multicultural student research team, two faculty advisors, the Pastoral Counseling Department, and Loyola University, our team is critically evaluating social science data collected in Ferguson, Missouri on racial inequities, community trauma, and leadership through Loyola's Center for Trauma Studies and Resilience Leadership.

Because I am monoculture, there are aspects of the multiethnic research that cannot be evident to me. This is why it is important to work with a truly multi-cultural team of researchers to interpret the data collected. It is not about having people who look differently than me; it is about having people who understand our social worlds differently from me because of their unique life experiences. Only when all voices

are represented in decision-making can we hope to embody cultural pluralism.

Living justice at Loyola is to intentionally engage in conversations with people who do not look like me or live like me. This means talking with people of different races, religions, sexual orientations, ages and disabilities. It means talking about these tough topics and trusting others' experiences that may be different than mine. It is essential to constantly explore and reevaluate oneself for personal bias and blind spots. Biases are not a one-and-done deal. We are constantly being exposed to new information, especially as students, and have opportunities for greater self-awareness and improvement just as frequently. One of the chief contributors to maintaining a status quo that marginalizes minorities is to believe social justice is a box that can be checked and looked away from rather than a skill that involves maintenance.

“Living justice” may be easier at a Jesuit institution like Loyola because of its focus on solidarity. Still, there are instances when minority students feel that they are being treated unjustly. It is necessary for each student, faculty and staff person to personally take responsibility for living justice on our campuses, in our communities, and in our country.