Marylou Shockley, Ph.D.
Interim Dean, College of Business

It is my honor and privilege to welcome you to the Ethics and Responsible Business Forum. This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of this cross-college event, marking the continued interdisciplinary collaboration across the College of Business, the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Health Sciences and Human Services and the College of Science at CSU Monterey Bay. This event also showcases our combined commitment to develop knowledge and critical thinking through respectful discussion and debate on moral and ethical aspects of societal and business practices.

This year the forum focuses on “Woke Capitalism: Should Businesses Jump In or Stay Out?” to explore the dilemma businesses face regarding their involvement in supporting social change and addressing issues of inequity. Their involvement is often expected by consumers or driven by competition but carries the risk of alienating consumers and being criticized as hypocritical or narrowly supporting a progressive agenda. Furthermore, their participation in this sphere can be considered a moral obligation or an overreach outside the scope of business activity.

Please join our two distinguished keynote speakers and notable panelists as they engage in civil exchange of ideas to discuss and debate the phenomena and implications of woke capitalism.

Harald Barkhoff, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Health Sciences and Human Services

Aloha! I am honored and humbled to welcome you to the 20th Annual Ethics & Responsible Business Forum, as the analysis of corporate involvement in politics and social movements is more relevant today than ever. At the outset of every major recent social movement, from Black Lives Matter to violent conflicts on the global stage, businesses struggle with the decision to remain neutral or vocally stand on one side of a socio-economic divide. Our nation is experiencing substantial social change as multiple years of a global pandemic and a polarizing political climate forces us to examine our responsibility to each other, to underserved and indigenous communities, and to those unable to speak for themselves. In my role as the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Human Services it is my responsibility to foster both the education of our students in their chosen fields of service and the growth of competent and culturally resonant future leaders. This timely and necessary forum seeks to explore whether businesses should join the flood of corporate activism and if so, how to do so responsibly and equitably.

Juanita Cole, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

As the Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at CSUMB, it is an honor to help support the 20th Annual Ethics and Responsible Business Forum. To better understand the role of businesses in the racial justice and equity movement it is important to critically consider the historical
Politics and Economics shaped the US from the very beginning and continue to be intertwined today. In a society in which racial disparities in income, asset accrual and economic mobility remain challenges, what role, if any, should businesses play in creating effective pathways for historically marginalized Americans to earn, grow and pass on wealth. This year’s timely forum seeks to question Corporate America’s role in a fight for racial justice. “Should Businesses Jump In or Stay Out?” Please join the distinguished keynote speakers and our expert panel as they interrogate businesses’ moral responsibility to weigh in on national issues concerning discrimination and inequality.

Andrew Lawson, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Science

The College of Science is proud to be a partner in bringing you the 20th Annual Ethics and Responsible Business Forum. This year’s forum explores the question of whether we should expect corporations to act on their values in the public arena. In a society that is increasingly divided, is it a good thing to have certain brands that are aligned with your politics? In recent weeks we have seen major global corporations take very strong stands in opposition to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Does the answer to whether we want our corporations taking stances on issues not related to their core business depend on the issue in question? I look forward to our conversation.