

THE ARLINGTON PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

June, 2020

The killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and Ahmaud Abrey and so many others have clearly unveiled tragedies and injustices in our society, leaving many scarred with legitimate pain, outrage, and anguish. Further, these tragedies unmask the injustices Black Americans and people of color have encountered for generations.

Part of our mission is to build understanding of issues of equity for all children and families in Arlington. Therefore We, the **Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth, and Family (APCYF)**, hear the cries of our community and stand together in this fight for justice. In solidarity with #BlackLivesMatter we join the calls for racial justice. We stand with our community youth leaders, the **Teen Network Board** who issued a [statement](#) and shared resources available to their peers.

Further, these tragedies unmask the injustices Black Americans and people of color have encountered for generations across America - and within our own Arlington community.

We will act with intent, mindful of the legacy of our forefathers who stood for change, the legacies being created by those taking a stand and the legacy of those whose lives were taken. APCYF will lead with courage, confidence, and fidelity as we confront the disparities of racial injustice, and uplift those who are working to bridge the gap of such injustices.

Let us be reminded that the children we birth, raise, teach, mentor, love and support, must live in the world we create. Therefore, let us unceasingly seek to promote social cohesion within our entire community by working to strengthen our diversity, and create racial equity for the good of all of our youth by assuring that black children and their families are protected, valued, and respected.

We extend care to the youth, families, and communities we serve that are experiencing heartbreak, fear, and trauma as we process Mr. Floyd's death, and deaths of too many other victims of racial injustice. We stand in solidarity with communities of color who work to dismantle systems of oppression; true freedom is dependent on their liberation.

We commit to supporting and promoting relevant, actionable change to further the cause of social justice in our community. As an advisory commission to both the County and School Boards, we will continue to draw attention to the disparities in data ([link](#)) as reported by our youth.

Finally, we remember this message from Dr. King's Letter from the Birmingham Jail: *"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."*

"Certain conditions continue to exist in our society, which must be condemned as vigorously as we condemn riots. But in the final analysis, a riot is the language of the unheard. And what is it that America has failed to hear? ... It has failed to hear that the promises of freedom and justice have not been met... our nation's summers of riots are caused by our nation's winters of delay. And as long as America postpones justice, we stand in the position of having these recurrences of violence and riots over and over again. Social justice and progress are the absolute guarantors of riot prevention" - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. J. Michael Griffin

Co-Chair, Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth, and Family