

June 2, 2020

A JOINT STATEMENT FROM MEMBERS OF THE WORCESTER TOGETHER COALITION

Together we rise, together we stand, and together we change. On behalf of the Worcester Together Coalition, comprising more than 100 individuals and organizations formed in response to the COVID-19 crisis, we rise and we stand in condemnation of the brutal acts perpetrated by Minneapolis police officers in the murder of George Floyd. We stand in the name of countless Black lives lost at the hands of police and civil vigilantes and in the name of all Communities of Color that have and continue to experience institutional inequity and brutality. We seek to create and make change to shift the oppressive imbalances in our country in the name of all Communities of Color that have experienced profound loss including for George Floyd, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Alton Sterling, Sandra Bland, Botham Jean, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and for whom their families and communities have endured deep pain, anger, frustration, and fear because of systemic racism and inequity.

Silence is not an option. Action is paramount. Worcester Together has demonstrated our ability to act and respond in crisis through COVID-19. Today, we speak aloud in disgust and with deep sorrow for our community and our country, and to leverage our collective and unified power to act and make change. The devastating racial disparities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic are intrinsically related to our nation's history of white supremacy and structural racism. It is a legacy that we must reject and dismantle. As we seek to address the COVID-19 crisis and to build a fair and just "new normal" we commit ourselves to these principles in all that we do, both individually and collectively:

1. We will acknowledge the reality of white supremacy in our history and its insidious presence in our institutions, public school system, police department, community based organizations, and ways of doing business and will facilitate courageous conversations and frank discussion of the issues at hand as a community. We will recognize our inadvertent complicity in the perpetuation of this injustice.
2. We will approach every initiative, policy or program that we undertake as an opportunity to dismantle racism. We will do this explicitly and embrace accountability for our results.
3. We will consistently and promptly identify, name, question, and actively resist and denounce policies in our criminal justice, law enforcement, education and health institutions that injure people of color and deprive them of the opportunity to participate fully in the life of our community.
4. We will center, elevate and defer to voices of People of Color and support the economic advancement of Communities of Color by using our collective purchasing power to support locally owned Black, Latino, and immigrant businesses.

We are fallible humans acting in the name of humanity and cannot do this work alone. Please join us as we work together to create equity, shape and change our community and our country's course.

The Worcester Together Coalition as signed by:

Action! by Design
Alex M. Mooradian, Esq.
Ascentria Care Alliance

Mission E4
Michael Sleeper, Imperial Distributors
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Billy Fitzpatrick, College of the Holy Cross, 2020
 Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor
 Boys & Girls Club of Worcester
 Central Mass Housing Alliance
 CENTRO
 Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester
 Coghlin Electrical Contractors, Inc.
 Coghlin Network Services, Inc.
 Community Health Link
 Congressman Jim McGovern
 Department of Children and Families, Worcester East
 Department of Youth Service, Central Region
 Dress for Success Worcester
 Ed Augustus, City Manager, Worcester
 Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center
 Edward Street Child Services
 Emma Davison, College of the Holy Cross, 2021
 Face Mask Working Group - Mutual Aid Worcester
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 Greater Worcester Community Foundation
 Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester
 HOPE Coalition
 Imperial Distributors
 Jeremiah's Inn
 Joe Ertle, College of the Holy Cross
 Kimberly Salmon, Worcester Resident
 Latino Education Institute
 Legendary Legacies Inc
 Living In Freedom Together-LIFT
 Love Your Labels
 Main South Community Development Corporation
 Mark Richman, Professor, WPI
 MassHIRE, Worcester and Southbridge Career Centers
 Mayor Joseph M. Petty
 National Grid
 Open Sky Community Services
 Organization for Nonprofit Excellence (ONE Worcester)
 Pernet Family Health Service
 Project New Hope Inc.
 Quinsigamond Community College
 Regional Environmental Council of Central MA
 Senator Ed Markey
 Senator Harriette L. Chandler
 Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates
 Southeast Asian Coalition
 State Representative James O'Day
State Representative John J. Mahoney
 Straight Ahead Ministries
 The Clemente Course in the Humanities, Worcester
 The Guild of St. Agnes
 The Hanover Theatre and Conservatory for the Performing Arts
 Journey Community Church, Revs. Tom Sparling, Paul Joyal, Lou Soiles
 Together for Kids Coalition
 UMass Memorial Health Care
 United Way of Central Massachusetts
 University of Massachusetts Medical School
 University of Massachusetts Medical School
 Worcester Chamber Music Society/Neighborhood Strings
 Worcester Community Action Council
 Worcester Cultural Coalition
 Worcester Education Collaborative
 Worcester Family Partnership
 Worcester Housing Authority
 Worcester Interfaith
 Worcester Public Schools
 Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce
 Worcester State University
 Worcester Telegram and Gazette
 YMCA of Central Massachusetts
 YWCA Central Massachusetts