

# A CALL TO ACTION:

## OUR COMMITMENT TO DISMANTLING RACISM

We are saddened and dismayed, not only by the senseless killing of yet another Black person but also by the painful reality of how deeply ingrained racism remains in communities across the country, including our own. We hope that conversations are taking place now to help us find common ground and address the inequities that have been a part of our country for over 400 years.

But, we must commit to more than conversations; we must commit to action. In 1996, the Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance was founded by ordinary individuals. Bonded together by the desire to create an inclusive and welcoming community for all, they dedicated themselves to dismantling barriers.

We are committing to long-term reform, which includes educating and holding ourselves accountable and addressing anti-Blackness within our communities. We are committing to support local efforts that challenge and eradicate anti-Blackness within the circles we live in.

In his [Letter from a Birmingham Jail](#), Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote:

***“I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro’s great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen’s Council-er or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to ‘order’ than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: ‘I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action’; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man’s freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a ‘more convenient season.’ Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will.”***

We once again turn to our communities in hopes that others will join us and commit to finally dismantling barriers, thus ensuring that people of all races and ethnic backgrounds have equal access and opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their communities.

As community, nonprofit, education, religious, philanthropic, business, and government leaders, we recognize the critical need to act with fierce urgency.

We invite you to join us in making these commitments and collectively holding ourselves accountable to them by [signing this pledge of action](#):

## OUR PLEDGE

Over the days, weeks, months, and years ahead, each of us pledges to:

- Educate ourselves on the inequities that racism has created in our communities and our places of work.
- Understand our own privileges (and what white privilege means) and our biases to help us become accountable allies and activists.
- Listen and create safe spaces to have open and frank conversations about racism with our families, colleagues, and communities.
- Acknowledge the experiences of Black people's interactions with law enforcement officers.
- Eliminate racist policies, procedures, and systems in our organizations.
- Build relationships with the local Black community, Black organizations, Black businesses, and Black leaders.
- Step up, speak out, and take action to eliminate racism wherever and whenever it is encountered.

## TAKE THE PLEDGE

We encourage our leaders to join us in making these commitments and holding ourselves accountable to them by signing this pledge of action.

By acting together and standing together, we believe we can finally, make lasting change.

Let us be inspired by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in his Acceptance Speech, on the occasion of his award of the Nobel Peace Prize:

***"I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word."***