



In the wake of the murder of Mr. George Floyd, we are still searching for words adequate to express our disgust and horror over the actions of those responsible for his death; our deep sadness for Mr. Floyd's family, friends and community; and our anger over the repeated dehumanizing and fatal oppressive actions that threaten our nation. On behalf of the Worcester Community Action Council, we unequivocally condemn the police brutality that led to Mr. Floyd's death. We join the call for justice, unity, peace and reform.

Worcester Community Action Council is directly and indirectly affected by the tragic events in our country that have reopened wounds that were never healed. Our board of directors, staff and clients feel the impact of these events in deeply personal ways, and struggle with the feelings of fear, mistrust, separation, and anger. We stand together in solidarity with the thousands of peaceful demonstrators across the country who are demanding justice for Mr. Floyd and an end to the systemic and intentional acts of oppression imposed upon communities of color. George Floyd is now among countless, precious Black lives lost due to the imbalance of power in this country that has been perpetuated by racism. Systemic racism must end. We must hold ourselves accountable as allies to act as a relentless force for positive change.

Community Action was created in 1964 from the efforts of the Civil Rights Movement as part of the federal Economic Opportunity Act in the "War on Poverty". In our role in the community, WCAC must renew and strengthen our calls for an end to the poverty and inequity that threaten our society.

- We will be a strong voice against injustice, oppression and hate by advocating for policies that create equitable access to education, health, social and economic systems.
- We will continue to work to stabilize individuals and households through our programs while deepening our resolve to create economic self-sufficiency through financial building blocks.
- We will continue our leadership role in the City of Worcester's Safe and Successful Youth Initiative in partnership with the Worcester Police Department and Worcester Public Schools, recognizing youth employment and education are pathways for success.
- We will continue to invest resources in our youngest children across Southern Worcester County from ages zero to five as we help prepare them for long-term success in school and life.
- We will use our agency's purchasing power to support African American, Latinx and Immigrant- owned businesses by purchasing goods and services.
- We will support a diverse staff at all levels to work within our own agency staff to examine, change and navigate ourselves and our community into a just and equitable era.
- We will listen to the needs of our community and routinely shift our work to address these needs directly.
- We will partner with you, and like-minded organizations, to support initiatives that help our community heal, unify, and become stronger.

Together, we can make meaningful reforms, and change the course of the future for our children.

Marybeth Campbell
Executive Director

Noreen Johnson Smith
WCAC Board Chair

Statement endorsed by WCAC Board of Directors 6/2/2020

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