Dear MMCC Community,

Our nation is hurting. In the last few days, we’ve watched our cities ablaze as thousands march across the country against racial injustice. Fordham Road and various parts of New York City has experienced the looting and unrest that we are witnessing throughout the nation. The deaths of Philando Castile, Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Ahmaud Arbery, and now George Floyd are etched in our memories forever. Their lives represent an underlying issue of systemic racism that permeates our society. The 8 minutes and 46 seconds it took to extinguish the life of George Floyd is a chilling reminder that we are not equal. Floyd’s death gives light to the harsh realities of prejudice that has been prevalent in our society for centuries.

As a community-based organization, we are constantly fighting for the rights of those who are marginalized because of their social, racial, and economic status. This is a burden that is all too real for communities of color. What do we do? Where do we go from here?

There is so much anger and trauma, however, we cannot allow these emotions to consume us. We must use this energy to fuel change, not only to affect legislation, but to also create constructive dialogue, and build coalitions that will truly have a lasting impact on the world at large. We believe the nonprofit sector is at the heart of this change. In times of calamity and unrest, we have always been at the forefront of progress. In the past, our sector has helped change the trajectory of this country from the women’s liberation movement to civil rights.

Let us use our strength as a community to peacefully address the historical ills that continue to plague our society. Violence is not the antidote for change. It has caused too much-added pain and suffering. The power is in our collective voice. This November, please go out and vote, so that your voice can be heard. We must look to each other, our legislators, nonprofits, and our communities to change the landscape for the betterment of future generations.

In closing, we would like to thank the Assistant Directors of Youth Services Shonte Armstrong and Tashan Dawkins, and Program Director Tanika Francis for their insight and input in this letter. We appreciate your support. Below, we have included resource links to start the conversation on how we can move forward.

It Takes More Than Mass Protests to Drive Change

How Do Cities Dismantle Decades of Racial Injustice?

George Floyd. Ahmaud Arbery. Breonna Taylor. What do we tell our children?

How to talk to your children about protests and racism

Moments like now are why we teach: Educators tackle tough conversations about race and violence

Sincerely,

Rita Santelia
Chief Executive Officer

Jackina Farshtey
Chief of Staff

Liza Perez
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Mike Halpern
Director of Youth Services

Lenora Sealey
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