



Creating pathways out of homelessness, domestic violence and sexual assault leading to safe, stable and empowered lives

To Doorways executive leadership, staff and volunteers,

It has been an incredibly painful few weeks as we have all watched events unfold in the wake of the awful murder of George Floyd and loss of many other Black lives. The aftermath and outpouring of emotions across the country has demanded justice. The new calls to end racism are steady and justified. We support these efforts and join the community in a call to end the systemic economic and racial injustice that persists and devalues Black lives. All of this is happening in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and an unprecedented economic downturn that is bringing massive job and wage loss, housing instability and overall insecurity to families, amplifying the need for the housing and supportive services Doorways brings to the Arlington community.

The Board of Doorways has been reflecting on what we know has been a severely traumatic experience for many of you. We want to share with you our unequivocal stance against racial injustice and let you know we stand ready to work with the entirety of the Doorways community to ensure that these values are engrained in who we are as an organization, all of the work we do, our core values and mission, the programs we lead and the people we serve. The [Doorways value statement](#) emphasizes collaboration, respect, empathy, inclusivity, and empowerment. This is a moment to lift up these values in our work together. Our organization plays a critical role in the lives of Arlington's Black citizens and we know that the people we are here to serve are often the people who face racial discrimination and disproportionate economic distress. We also recognize that structural barriers and racism persists across America and that this organization has a solid and enduring commitment to inclusivity and equity as core to our mission and service.

We want to extend our sincere gratitude to all of you who are not only working on the front lines to support the trauma and needs of Doorways clients each day, but are also grappling with the painful realities of racism in your own life and families. We are committed to continuing the critical programs and a culture inside of Doorways that empowers each of you and your personal decisions to take part in peaceful protest, volunteer, and make your voices heard as we reckon with our country's deep racist history. We are inspired by the Doorways' leadership decision to hold an all staff holiday on Friday June 19th. We hope Juneteenth will offer you the time to reflect on the end of the enslavement of Black people and the structural remnants of that time in our history. Please take this personal time for introspection, to decide what actions, advocacy and learning you wish to take on. In these moments we search to find ways in which we can show up. Please know the best course of action requires you be rested and replenished in order to continue to advance the work that is ahead.

We are committed to working with Maureen Devine-Ahl, Doorways interim CEO, the leadership team, staff, and our community of volunteers and supporters to ensure that Doorways is present and ready to serve the Arlington community and our partners. We will continue working with the Arlington County Government, the Arlington Community Foundation Safety Net, the Arlington County Police Department, our donors and local non-profit partners on these tough issues of race and equity that are so closely tied to the mission of our organization. We amplify the sentiments of the Arlington County Board [statement](#) that "the anger and grief currently on display in cities across the nation is not only a reaction to these acts of ultimate violence against Black Americans but also to the systemic racism that pervades life, and access to opportunity in our nation. We know that Arlington is not exempt from this racism and its impacts."

Doorways has a critical role to play in this moment. We stand by Arlington County's efforts to continue to prioritize the work of advancing racial equity in public health and housing. As board members for a major provider of critical support services to the county, we will continue to advocate and lend our hearts and hands to the Doorways organization, local government, and the entire community to accelerate efforts toward a more just and equitable society.

In Solidarity,

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Saiful Amin
Sarah DeVoe
Nicholas Evans
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