

June 3, 2020

Ascend stands in solidarity against racism and violence. The tragic and senseless deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor and other acts of bias and violence against Blacks have shaken our country to its core. We are seeing with alarming frequency incidents that shed light on the inequality, racism, institutional bias and prejudice that many fellow Americans have endured for generations. There is no place for this. Each of these instances reaffirms to me the need for greater empathy, enlightenment and understanding, and the continued importance of closing the economic gaps that impact our workforce. We need to do much more collectively by listening to each other, acknowledging the work that we as a society must do, and taking action in a positive and constructive way. We cannot be complacent and must not be mere bystanders.

Covid-19 has impacted all of us in ways we could never have imagined. It has devastated our Black, Latinx, and Native American communities at disproportionate rates and brought abuse to our Asian American community. Recent heartbreaking events, together with the global COVID-19 pandemic, amplify the need for Ascend members to exercise resiliency and resolve and do better for our communities. Ascend doesn't have all the answers to solve for these highly complex and nuanced societal issues, but I do know that we have an important role to play. With our collaboration partners and 100+ supporting companies, we adopted our joint [5-Point Action Agenda](#). The core tenets of **Promote Inclusion, Raise Awareness, Denounce Bias, Support Communities, and Give Donations** apply now more than ever to our vulnerable and hurting communities. We are here for our black friends and colleagues, our corporate partners, members and the community at large to work together on solutions to make the change we want and need.

I am in active discussions with key CEO driven coalitions such as [CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion](#), senior company executives, our partners and Ascend members on how, as leaders, we will become more race conversant and reduce inequities in the workplace. On Friday, June 5th, Ascend will be hosting the first in a series of **Ascend Dialogs** to discuss how we can work together as a pan-Asian and broader community to mobilize and accelerate change in our workplaces and beyond.

As each of us internalizes and tries to make sense of what has happened, I personally urge you to:

- **Learn and increase fluency** about the human experiences and history of the Black community and other communities of color
- **Elevate your understanding** of our commonalities and appreciate our differences
- **Adopt our 5-point Action Agenda** and develop your personal actions
- **Devise strategies for candid conversations** with friends, family, and colleagues about racial injustice and disparities

Together we can accelerate change, begin the healing process and make meaningful and sustainable contributions to build a more equitable and inclusive society. Now more than ever, we need to ascend to the challenges before us.

#AscendTogether

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