The Community Youth Services (CYS) organization and volunteer collective stand in solidarity with the people and protests across our country and the world calling for justice in the killing of George Floyd as well as the countless recent and historic killings of Black, Brown, Asian and Indigenous people.

Witnessing the ongoing devaluing of Black lives and the systems that upholds oppressive policy continues to create injustice and inequity. This latest tragedy, continues to reveal our nation’s entrenched and systemic racism. It is an affirmation that Black members of our community, for centuries, have endured disproportionate impacts due to structural racism and implicit and explicit bias. It calls us to elevate “Black Lives Matter”.

We are sickened and angered by the virulent racism in our nation. It continues to create inequities in education, health and wellness, homelessness, housing and employment. The very systems we work tirelessly to reduce barriers within to aid youth, young adult and families impartial access to.

This injustice, coupled with COVID-19, continues to unveil and perpetuate these inequities and disparities in our society. These are not new and is deeply rooted in our systemic framework. It is essential we all acknowledge the trauma, pain, anger and frustration that so many are experiencing.

We will not be silent in the face of racism and injustice. We will listen, learn and grow as an organization to create an equitable humanity. One that denounces and dismantles systemic oppression. One that centers and supports the voices and experiences of Black family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and community partners actively and indefinitely.

These values align with what our mission was founded on - services and advocacy supporting youth, young adults and their families, in meeting their goals of safety, stability, belonging and success. Achieving our mission requires us to fight for equity and racial justice. We believe in strengthening our communities by empowering youth and families to create their own success. **Through not just our words, but through our actions. Then, and only then, can we create a just society.**