Communications

Subject: Capitol Collaborative on Race & Equity: You Matter. We care.

To: Communications <communications@phi.org>
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Dear Capitol Collaborative on Race & Equity (CCORE) colleagues,

We care about you. These are incredibly trying times full of grief and stress — in many ways unprecedented and also too common.

To our Black colleagues and partners, you may feel angry, drained, scared, exhausted, checked-out. We see you. We understand these words might bring little consolation and that actions speak more to the moment than our words ever could. This violence against Black people — the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Monika Diamond, Tony McDade, and too many other Black brothers and sisters that died violently this year and in the past — requires intentional support from all non-Black people.

To our non-black colleagues of color, these feelings may also resonate with you. We care about you and the ways you are hurt by racism, and we call you in to deepen learning and action against colorism and anti-Black sentiment. To our White colleagues and partners, we care about you. We call you in to deepen your learning and action against racism.

Racism is a public health issue, and the public health field recognizes that the experience of racism generates psychosocial distress and has emotional and physiological effects. Compounded by the inequitable impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Black community, there is a multiplier effect in terms of physical and mental health burden that is undeniably rooted in structural racism.

We found Governor Newsom’s June 1st update on demonstrations across the state particularly relevant, and were pleased to see such close alignment with our CCORE work. Here are a few excerpts:

“The question we have to ask ourselves - are we capable of not just meeting this moment, but capable of doing justice to the moments in front of us?”

“The Black community is not responsible for what’s happening in this country right now. We are... Our institutions are responsible. We are accountable to this moment... We have a unique responsibility to the Black community in this country and we’ve been paying lip service to that for generations...”

“We don’t systemically, foundationally address the root of these issues - we prune. We don’t tear out the institutional racism from all of our institutions large and small. We don’t. We know that. The community knows that. You’re seeing that manifested out in the streets. The last five days. They know that. The question is do we?...”

“Are we prepared to do something differently about that? ...What are we going to do differently – fundamentally, foundationally – not in the short run, but in the long run to do justice to this moment?”
Our team facilitates CCORE as a space for support and community, as well as action. CCORE convenes California State government entities working together to embed racial equity approaches into institutional culture, policies, and practices to prevent and help heal the community trauma of racism. We have great appreciation for each of you - for your dedication, hard work, and personal as well as organizational commitments to social and racial justice.

It is an honor to do this work alongside you. We care deeply about you and the community we have collectively built.

In partnership, service, and solidarity,

Lianne Dillon, Holly Nickel, Julia Caplan, Colin Gutierrez, and Nancy Garcia
Public Health Institute’s CCORE Staff

- Read PHI’s Statement on Police Killing of George Floyd
- Read Race Forward’s Statement – Justice Now

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