A Message to the OMD Community

Dear One Million Degrees community,

We are hurting. Over the past week, we have been forced, yet again, to face the truthful moment when deep-seated oppression manifests as violence toward Black Americans. The murder of George Floyd – which took place shortly after the shocking killings of Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor – has sparked profound pain, frustration, and outrage across the country and in the OMD community.

As leaders of the organization, it is important to us to speak out against these heinous acts. To our Black scholars, apprentices, staff and volunteers, we stand with you. As Cook County State’s Attorney Kim Foxx stated, we cannot continue the casual acceptance of systemic racism in this country.

OMD was founded on the belief that equitable access and opportunity for people of all ages, races, and backgrounds is the key to a truly inclusive society. Particularly at a time like this, it is important that we acknowledge the impact of racism and inequity, and how recent events are taking an emotional toll on the Black community. Not only are they faced with the incomprehensible images of recent atrocities against unarmed Black people, they are also suffering from the inequities of the health care system during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is heavy. It hurts. It is unjust. We are not shying away from reality. The multifaceted diversity of this country, this city, and this organization is an asset that must not only be appreciated but also prioritized. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that Black voices and Black lives are valued equally.

OMD recognizes and respects people of all backgrounds. We are committed to continuing to address injustices and partner with local officials and organizations to demand change. It may be hard to see now, but we believe that standing together for what’s right will bring change that is long overdue.

Sincerely and in solidarity,

OMD Leadership Team

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