



NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
FAMILY PHILANTHROPY

June 2, 2020

Dear Community Members:

This is a sobering time. The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other Black people as a result of unconscionable acts of violence and aggression is once again challenging our nation to acknowledge the long-held suffering of communities of color across the United States. We are witnessing a response to centuries of racism and oppression that continue to be willfully ignored, and in many circumstances, perpetuated. This is a historic moment—one when we must ask ourselves what is needed to promote justice.

We must also ask ourselves how we—as a community of grantmakers—will earnestly prepare to advance a solution. Are we ready to acknowledge implicit bias? Are we ready to examine how we contribute to inequality? Are we ready to act with a conscious commitment to anti-racism?

Now is not the time to retreat from difficult questions or actions that feel in opposition to our beliefs. Now is the time to embrace the uncertainty and discomfort. This shift requires commitment and intentionality; it requires learning and exploration. While questions on impact loom large, particularly as it relates to social justice, criticism and intimidation is not an excuse to withdraw or delay; it's an invitation to seek knowledge.

There is tremendous possibility in the power of philanthropy, especially when it's harnessed properly. Success is borne out of a commitment to listen to the communities you seek to serve, structure support to fund movements, and, as Will Cordery notes in his recent [Nonprofit Quarterly article](#), “fund spaces that foster a radical imagination and the creation of new ways of being that could potentially replace centuries of systemic and structural racist practices in our society.”

There is no shortage of articles and resources that attempt to diagnose the problem and proffer solutions; yet many of us are wrestling with the fundamental questions themselves: what is equity; how does it transform communities; what is the role of philanthropy; is it effective; and what can a family do to repair broken systems? We are here to assist you explore these questions.

In the coming weeks, we will convene the family philanthropy community to facilitate an open and honest dialogue on the role of philanthropy to promote anti-racist outcomes. In the meantime, we encourage you to visit our website for a list of [resources](#) to further your learning. We are also launching a Learning and Action Network for families interested to incorporate an expressed commitment to racial equity into their philanthropic governance. We hope you will join us!

Lastly, we are eager to hear from [you](#). What are your learnings; what are your challenges? We are committed to stand alongside each of you on this historic journey.

In Partnership,

Kimberly Myers Hewlett  
Chair of the Board of Directors

Nicholas A. Tedesco  
President & CEO