

A Statement from the Leaders of the Town Library Committee, The Library Corporation, and the Friends of the Concord Free Public Library -- June 15, 2020

What is a [person] born for but to be a reformer, a remaker of what has been made, a denouncer of lies, a restorer of truth and good? ~ Emerson

In the wake of the brutal murder of George Floyd and in recognition that this event is just one in a series of devastating losses America's Black community has experienced, we, the leaders of the Town Library Committee, the Library Corporation, and the Friends of the Concord Free Public Library, would like to state plainly that we condemn racism in all forms. In this historic moment, we stand together in support of our Black family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and patrons in our fight for safety, equity, and justice.

The Library was established on the foundational principle that it be free and open to all. Its mission is to connect community members to information, ideas, culture, historical resources, and each other. In our mutual commitment to further those values, *we know we can do better and we will do more*. We commit to the following actions:

- The Library Committee will include specific Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals in the Library's Long Range Plan.
- The Library Committee will engage in discussions with librarians to encourage representation of a broad range of identities in our collections, our displays, and the authors we include in our collections.
- The Library Corporation will meet with the Curator of Special Collections to discuss representation in our Special Collections and to encourage that Concord's Black history is accurately and fully represented.
- The Library Corporation will provide a speaker series to engage in civic discussion about race, diversity, prejudice, inclusion, and representation.
- The Friends of the Library will continue to fund the Unconscious Bias program offered through the Concord-Carlisle Adult & Community Education (CCACE).
- The Friends of the Library will continue to include a diverse range of speakers in our ongoing programs, including the Poetry, Author, Film, and Music Series, as well as the Festival of Authors.
- The Friends of the Library will seek to provide additional programs that offer diverse perspectives and directly address the structural changes necessary to mitigate past and current racial injustices.
- The Library Corporation, the Friends of the Library, and the Town Library Committee will prioritize identifying a diverse range of candidates for their board membership.

We are grateful to the Library staff members who have curated lists of books and media to support, inspire, and inform our ongoing fight for racial justice:

<https://concordlibrary.org/resources/booklist/books-about-racism>.

Our hearts are with you, our community, as we stand together in condemning racism. We must do better.

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Sincerely,

Tara Edelman, Chair of the Town Library Committee

Sherry F. Litwack, President of the Concord Free Public Library Corporation

Aiyana Currie, President of the Friends of the Concord Free Public Library