

Joint Statement in Support of Black Lives Matter and a Call to Action (4/22/2021)

While a jury in Minneapolis was listening to evidence and preparing to convict Derek Chauvin, the police officer who murdered George Floyd...we once again witnessed disturbing acts of violence and aggression against our Black and Brown neighbors across the country.

We saw a 20-year-old young Black father gunned down by Kim Potter, a former police officer with 26 years on the Brooklyn Center police force, just miles away from the trial in Minneapolis.

We saw a 13-year-old Brown boy shot and killed by police after turning around and putting his hands up in Chicago.

We saw video from late last year of an enlisted Black U.S. Army Lieutenant being pepper sprayed and assaulted by police at a traffic stop in Virginia - and video from just last week of a white soldier assaulting and accosting a Black man for merely walking in his own neighborhood.

Hours after the verdict, we heard news of yet another fatal police-related shooting of a Black teenager in Columbus, Ohio.

And closer to home, according to research by the Westchester Coalition for Police Reform, we have seen 20 people killed in our county at the hands of police and law enforcement in the past 15 years.

We stand united against these despicable and deplorable acts - and the gut-wrenching display of heartlessness, inhumanity and lawlessness by law enforcement officers and the decommissioned soldier involved in these incidents.

We can no longer stand by as our Black and Brown neighbors grow more fearful of being assaulted and gunned down each time they encounter a police officer - or each time one of our friends, sons, daughters, spouses or parents merely leave the comfort of their home, or in the cases of Breonna Taylor and Botham Jean, sleep or eat ice cream while in their own homes.

And we will no longer be content with just comforting and reassuring each other through our collective experience of trauma, pain, terror and anguish every time one of these incidents makes the news. Injustice and violence against any of our neighbors is an unjust and violent assault on each and every one of us.

Enough is enough. The time for action is NOW, as it is long overdue.

We support and stand next to every one of our fellow local residents and activists who wish to come out and demonstrate in the wake of these horrific events and the Chauvin verdict -

including those attending the rally planned by the **Irvington BLM Activists** in front of **Irvington Town Hall on Saturday, April 24 at 1 p.m.**

In the meantime, we call on every one of our elected local officials to unequivocally proclaim and affirm that Black Lives Matter - in the River Towns, in Greenburgh, in Westchester, in New York State, and everywhere.

We call on our local village, town and city governments to establish formal local human rights committees and commissions dedicated to serving as watchdogs against incidents of racially motivated violence and bias, as well as educating residents on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and all of the intersections.

We call on our local leaders to commit themselves to listening to Black and Brown residents and other communities of color through regularly scheduled community forums or listening sessions.

Finally, we call on our local governments to establish essential formal processes that would result in true policing reform and reinvention - because each and every one of our neighbors should feel equally safe, protected and welcome in our communities.

Hatred, violence, divisiveness and fear - whether it is weaponized and perpetuated by a police officer or a private citizen - should never have any home here.

Sincerely,

Greenburgh Human Rights Advisory Committee
Tarrytown-Sleepy Hollow Human Rights Action (TASHRIA)
Westchester Black Women's Political Caucus
River Towns Civil Rights Forum
Irvington BLM Activists
Dobbs Ferry Human Rights and Diversity Committee
Dobbs Ferry Library Board of Trustees
Dobbs Ferry PTSA
Dobbs Ferry PTSA Diversity Committee
Dobbs Ferry for Social Justice
Dobbs Ferry Democratic Committee
Dobbs Ferry Public Library Board of Trustees
Dobbs Ferry Mayor Vincent Rossillo
Dobbs Ferry Village Board of Trustees
Our Streets Dobbs Ferry
Hastings Village Board of Trustees
Concerned Families of Westchester (CFOW)
Parenting Children of Color (P-CoC)
Ardley RACE (Racial Advocacy Committee for Equity)

Ardsley Democratic Committee
Ardsley Mayor Nancy Kaboolian
Ardsley Village Board of Trustees
Ardsley Village Multicultural, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) Westchester
Hastings RISE (Racial Inclusion and Social Equity)
Westchester Antiracist Alliance
Westchester SOJL
Westchester New Breed
Progressive Women of New York
Progressive Women of Pelham
Indivisible Scarsdale

PLEASE NOTE: *The signatures to this statement are a list in formation, so we urge you to visit the following page to see an updated and current list of groups and individuals who have signed: <https://www.tarrytownhumanrights.org/blm-april-2021>*