



June 8, 2020

Dear Expressiones Community,

We hope you and your families are well.

We wish we never had to send this email.

### **Black Lives Matter**

We want back the lives of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade (Tallahassee, FL), Atatiana Jefferson (Fort Worth, TX), Tamir Rice (Cleveland, OH), Eric Gardner (Staten Island, NY), Michael Brown (Ferguson, MO), Pamela Turner (Baytown, TX), Marquise Jones (San Antonio, TX) and countless others whose lives have been taken due to police brutality and the effects of white supremacy. We wish that institutional racism, and the violence it gives rise to, had not caused their deaths. We need all Black members of our community to feel safe enough to move around their homes and cities without fear.

We are enraged by the blatant hatred and inhumane disregard by the police officers on May 25th for George Floyd's life as he pleaded for breath. We wish that we didn't have to try to find the words to explain all of this to our students, children, families, and friends.

We bear witness and mourn for the continued violence against yet another Black life, and we speak from the deepest impulses of our hearts to uplift Black Lives.

We stand with all who condemn racism and violence in all its forms, starting with the trafficking, torture, and enslavement of Africans some 400 years ago.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light the racial inequities that are the result of a deeply entrenched racist and unjust system. Twice as many black children as white live in poverty and are, from the beginning, set up for a life of poor health and education, and few opportunities. This does not paint a picture of a democratic society.

We recognize that there is urgent work to do in our community to dismantle the denial that undergird pervasive racism.

We want to be part of the solution.

As a non-profit community-based arts organization Expressiones embraces the principles of equity and social justice.

We pledge to do more. We will act and be present, unequivocally in support of this movement. Through the arts we will raise our voice and our name where it matters.

In gratitude and solidarity,

Expressiones and all its *Board of Directors*

Timothy Fioravanti President

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Naomi Otterness, Treasurer

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Expressiones is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing the community with quality artistic programming.

We celebrate diversity by inspiring the community to immerse themselves in the music, art, and customs of our multicultural population.