



To our nonprofit colleagues:

Over the last few weeks, like you, we've watched the world's response to the horrific murders of innocent African Americans at the hands of white and non-black persons of color. Never before has the reaction been so swift, impactful, and widespread. For the first time in history, statements have been issued from organizations ranging from Fortune 500 companies to major nonprofit agencies - statements that denounce racism and discrimination and promise to prioritize diversity and inclusion practices.

While we had no doubt about HANO's commitment to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the nonprofit sector, we were uncertain what HANO's role should be. As an intermediary, we often encourage the sector coming together to have a collective voice on issues, but we also try to be sensitive to not overshadow our members' individual voices when they are more powerful. So many of you put out amazing, thoughtful and truly heartfelt statements. We wondered what we could possibly say that hadn't already been said and felt we couldn't say it any better than many of you already had. We also knew that if we did share something of our own, it had to be authentic to HANO and honestly reflect the work we're doing to support racial justice.

So we talked about it with each other. A lot. Staff meetings have been filled with conversations regarding our own experiences with racism, discussions about current events as they unfolded, and sharing resources about racial justice. We asked our board members, particularly those of color, for insight and advice. We looked at our own [core values](#) and started asking ourselves some tough questions - are we practicing what we preach? Can we be a leader in driving change in the sector if we haven't done all the work within our own organization yet?

As we attempted to untangle our personal perspectives from the organization's obligation to speak out, we began to have some difficult conversations about our individual belief systems and how our own experiences have framed our perspectives. We looked at the unique history of race and oppression that has occurred in Hawai'i. We began to unpack our own privileges and consider how they could be (even if unintentionally) barriers to each of us doing more to challenge systemic racism.

We also talked about HANO's role in the fight for social and racial justice, as a state association whose mission is to *unite & strengthen the nonprofit sector as a collective force to improve the quality of life in Hawai'i*. We looked at our own organizational history and dug deep to find the areas where we've done some good work and the areas where we need to do better.

What we concluded was that it IS critical for HANO to publicly condemn racism and discrimination in any form. To say nothing signals to the black community and to other people of color that we are okay with the status quo. To be silent is to be complicit with systemic

racism. Neither of these align with our personal or organizational values. We concluded it is equally critical to be transparent about the work we are doing to improve the diversity, equity and inclusion within our own organization, and about what we commit to you - our constituents. We will continue to [share resources and information](#) in support of your missions and the people you serve.

As the Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations, we commit to the following:

- 1) We will continue to engage with you in asking tough questions and having honest conversations about diversity, inclusion, and equity through our [Decent Work in the Nonprofit Sector initiative](#).
- 2) By the end of 2020, HANO will have a comprehensive Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy that aligns with our values and articulates our organizational commitment to this work.
- 3) In our strategic and financial planning discussions, we will emphasize diversity, equity and inclusion, and allocate resources accordingly (including to continue to support and maintain our [Decent Work initiative](#)).
- 4) We will continue to actively recruit board and staff members who represent the diversity of the communities we serve and check in on our recruitment and hiring practices regularly to ensure that they are equitable and fair.
- 5) We will continue to promote events and learning opportunities about diversity, equity and inclusion and their connection to nonprofit work.
- 6) We will build on our previous efforts to ensure access and resources to support a diverse group of participants at our events by using a "blind" application process to further reduce the chances of any unconscious bias when selecting scholarship recipients.
- 7) As staff and board members, we will explore our personal biases and consider how we can diminish them to actively support racial justice. We will continue to provide safe and brave spaces to discuss these issues, without rebuke or retaliation.
- 8) We will support professional development opportunities for our staff and board related to diversity, inclusion, and equity.
- 9) We will invite and be open to your feedback about our diversity, equity, and inclusion work and how we can improve.
- 10) We will remind ourselves that we are not perfect and acknowledge that we will make mistakes along the way.

We all have work to do. If we can do anything to support you in your work, please let us know.

With Aloha,
The HANO Team