

Indianapolis Art Center Community,

In the preceding months our communities and our nation have been called upon to enforce change, promote progress and hold ourselves accountable. Organizations have been asked to examine their pasts, current practices and strategies for the future. We, as a cultural organization, are a community of artists and creators, designers and teachers as well as patrons of the arts. Our unique position in our arts community requires us to act. The history of the arts is rife with challenges to systemic issues, expressive identities and the safety to be who you are without judgement. We have every intention of upholding that legacy.

As an organization we have heard the calls from our community members and students, we've spoken as staff and board about the need for lasting and effective changes and we are here to share that change is coming. Released with this statement are the bylaws and tenets of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, a collective group of staff and board members. The makeup of our committee includes individuals with personal and professional experiences in inclusion and equity work. We all share the common goal of making the Indianapolis Art Center an inclusive, accessible and equitable space for all of our current and future community members.

While we are aware that many have called for changes quickly and immediately, we must be clear in our intention. The purpose of this committee will be to address the three outlined focus areas; organizational structure and policies, educational and event programming, and community interaction and engagement. Furthermore, our role will be to review and appoint an external consultant(s), facilitate the consultant's work with our staff and board, and finally to provide the guidelines and requirements for policy and programmatic changes. The purpose of this committee is not merely to implement reactionary and superficial changes, but to understand and address existing systemic inequities within our control to ensure that we can truly build an inclusive and anti-racist community through art. We collectively know and understand that we must dedicate ourselves to this process for years to come.

As we navigate this journey, we understand that we must expand on the work we do in Indianapolis and work with the many communities within it. As an organization, we acknowledge that we must project the voices of those who go unheard and we must give up space for others at the proverbial table. We are pleased to be able to announce our partnership with 18 local artists, most recently known for the creation of the Black Lives Matter mural on Indiana Avenue. Through this partnership the Art Center will host an initial exhibition, EIGHTEEN: Black Lives Matter, celebrating these artists and their mural. The exhibition will open for public view on October 23, 2020. A year later, we will again host these artists to look at how their lives and the City of Indianapolis have changed following calls for action and progress.

Continued actions we take going forward will display our commitment to all members of our community, whether they be BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, functionally diverse or those of any marginalized community. We ask that you, as our community members and patrons, trust in our collective knowledge, drive, and focus to instill lasting change. We ask for your support as we work to educate and re-educate ourselves. We are determined and devoted to making the Indianapolis Art Center an inclusive and welcoming space for every member of our community and to make this organization a model one for others.

Thank you for your patience and understanding,

Nikki Rogers

Board Co-Chair

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Member - Board of Directors

Colton Pedro

Staff Co-Chair

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Director of Education, Outreach + Exhibitions

Acknowledgment by,

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