



Commitment to Young People

We join with countless others as we continue to mourn the senseless killing of George Floyd in the hands of Minneapolis Police on Monday May 25. Protests allowing our community a way to express our anger, hurt, pain, and fear have been critical to moving forward as a city and a people demanding justice.

We are so proud of the role that young people, particularly Black, Brown, Indigenous, Asian American, Latinx and Immigrant Communities, have played and continue to play in leading and participating in protests and reform movements and in demanding justice. Young people have been at the forefront of social change throughout the history of the United States and the world. This time is no exception. We appreciate and lift up youth leadership and honor their bravery, passion, involvement and activism.

Young people prove every day that they are equal partners in leading in the fight for justice and equitable system reform. They come to the table with valuable experience and legitimate ideas for transformation. They also demand more of us when plans fall short of adequately addressing systemic oppression and white supremacy. Since white supremacy produces and reinforces trauma that damages healthy child and youth development, engagement in creating the transformative future of which we all speak is a key to healing.

We know the power of centering youth experience and voice. It is essential to the work of the YCB. Without the partnership of the Minneapolis Youth Congress, our work would lack vibrancy, relevancy and vitality. Simply put, it would not reflect the perspective of young people.

We call on public and private sectors to directly and intentionally include young people in decision-making and to respectfully acknowledge their significance in bringing about change. Let's use this transformational time, this critical moment, to finally acknowledge the value of our young people and to include them as important leaders at the table. Lift up the motto of the Minneapolis Youth Congress – "No Decision About Us, Without Us" - as fundamental to transformational change.

In return, we at the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board commit to centering youth voices and sharing our expertise and experience in intentionally and authentically including young people as transformation moves forward.

This week, as we reflect on the values upon which our country is founded, let us take giant steps toward forming a more perfect union. Those of us who are not Black, Brown or Indigenous especially must act diligently and with speed in support of Black and Brown lives, to end white supremacy, police brutality and the clear systemic injustices as evidenced by inequities in health care, education, criminal justice and the economy. Acting together and with great dispatch is imperative if Black, Brown and Indigenous People can finally realize, without impediment, the ideals upon which the United States is founded.

As we move forward, let's actualize the first words of the Declaration of Independence,
"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all . . . are created equal by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."