



June 1, 2020

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

**There will never be a WE as long as there is a THEY.**

Simple words. A long road.

Many in our country are reeling from the senseless death of George Floyd, an African American man in Minneapolis. On the same day, another African American man was unfairly threatened by a fellow citizen in New York City’s Central Park. Citing these and other similarly tragic recent events, civil rights attorney Ben Crump states, “This is a moment for deep reflection and fundamental change.” He goes on to ask, “And what can we do to correct course?”

The missions of our organizations and the programs, resources, and systems created to support the children and families we serve were born to give voice to marginalized, vulnerable, or victimized members of our communities. A large proportion of those within the populations we serve deal daily with the very real impacts of racial inequity.

We acknowledge the inequity at the center of countless incidents that are statistically more likely to happen to people of color. As leaders of youth-serving organizations, we re-dedicate ourselves to doing our part to correct course for the children and families we serve, as well as for future generations.

We commit to collaborating with one another and partnering with advocates, organizations, and all those who work toward a common pursuit of **equity**. Together, we aspire to systemically change the inequity in our structures and cultures that contribute to tragedies like the one that took Mr. Floyd’s life.

Our collective endeavor is driven by these words:

**There will never be a WE as long as there is a THEY.**

Simple words. A long road.

Gerson Martinez  
Executive Director, Talbot Mentors

Matthew Peters  
Executive Director, ChesMRC

Lauren Weber  
Executive Director, Character Counts

Derick Daly  
Executive Director, BAAM

Vivian Landau  
Executive Director, Mid-Shore Scholars

Robin Davenport  
Executive Director, CASA of the Mid-Shore