



January, 2021

WE STAND WITH BLM

BLACK LIVES MATTER

By Jillian Hardy and Jennifer Willner

Last year we witnessed thousands and thousands of people, of all ethnicities, ages and walks of life, in all cities and places around the world, take to the streets in the wake of Minneapolis police killing an unarmed Black man, George Floyd. In these protests, we saw the presence of three very important words that make up a



movement, Black Lives Matter. We now see the display of BLM lining the store fronts of our community in support and allyship to Black persons in our communities. By now biases may have formed around the BLM movement, but we are here to remind you what exactly BLM stands for, and why we, as the Y, support the BLM movement.

Specifically, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement is defined a decentralized political and social movement advocating for non-violent civil disobedience in protest against incidents of police brutality and all racially motivated violence against Black people.

The research data shows, unequivocally, that Black people are five times more likely to be stopped by police than white people. Further, 84% of Black adults say white people are treated better than Black people by police; and 63% of white adults agree, based on 2019 research on police relations. 5% of illicit drug users are African American, yet African Americans represent 29% of those arrested and 33% of those incarcerated for drug offenses. Basically, the social science research data tells us that there are two systems of justice in the United States: one for white people, and one for people of color. Undeniably, Black people have been systematically oppressed in this country since the first ships carrying enslaved persons landed in Virginia in August of 1619. We cannot deny these facts, but we can make conscious change to end racial injustice in our community and our country.



Across the country, local and state leaders are declaring racism a public health crisis or emergency. These declarations are an important first step in the movement to advance racial equity and justice and must be followed by allocation of resources and strategic action. On November 24, 2020, the Whatcom County Board of Health declared racism a public health crisis. The Whatcom Family Y—being an organization that is deeply rooted in community development—finds it necessary to project our stance on racial inequity in our community, condemn racial injustices, show our support and fight to make sure that we represent diversity, embrace equity and strive to be an inclusive organization where all BIPOC in our community feel welcome, represented, and safe.

YMCA STAFF TRAINING

We are creating a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion staff training program for our Organization. It will include required on-line training as well as optional enrichment activities and discussion groups.

The first training that we need all staff to take is the Y-USA's **Orientation to Diversity, Inclusion and Global**. This is assigned to all new staff so some staff have already taken it. Staff that have not completed yet, will be assigned the training through the LCDC (the YMCA's training platform).

It is our goal to have everyone complete this training by the end of February.



Founders of BLM - Opal Tometi, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors

FURTHER RESOURCES:

- [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#)
By Robin DiAngelo
- [How to Be an Antiracist](#)
By Ibram X Kendi
- [So You Want to Talk About Race](#)
By Ijeoma Oluo
- [Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents](#)
By Isabel Wilkerson
- [Between the World and Me](#)
By Ta-Nehisi Coates