What is our way forward?

Grief is clearly an appropriate response. But hope is a needed response.

I grieve for Breonna Taylor, for George Floyd, for David McAtee, and for their families. I grieve for the countless numbers of black men and women and children harmed by racism. I grieve for our communities now in so much unacknowledged pain that it is spilling out onto the streets.

I grieve because injustice has deep roots, and so many of us still don’t know our own history and what must be righted. I grieve because, from points of privilege, it’s hard to see how we perpetuate the very systems that cause so much pain and inequity.

And yet I am hopeful because we have so many passionate, capable leaders in our community, ready to respond and devote this community’s resources to finally securing equity and compassion that extends to all. I am hopeful because responding to inequity and injustice is at the heart of what our nonprofit sector does – and we are strong.

As our community commits to rooting out systemic racism, each of us will have opportunities to learn, to reflect, and to lead in new ways. CNPE has long valued diversity, equity, and inclusion – and, like many other nonprofit organizations, we are on a journey to do better. As we take our journey, we stand ready to help others on theirs. I hope you will reach out and let us know what you need. It’s okay to be honest and vulnerable – we’ll learn together.

Moving forward requires an honest reckoning with where we’ve been and where we are. I hope we seize this moment to move to where we want to be. Together.

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