

## DMFAH Black Lives Matter Newsletter Statement, 2020

The Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History sympathizes with the family of George Floyd, and would like to express our dismay as we have witnessed the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and the countless others in our country who have lost loved ones. Together, we must stand united with those seeking justice.

At the Museum we have a Civil Rights exhibition permanently installed that has the words spoken by Martin Luther King Jr. on July 11, 1963 at the High Street Baptist Church in Danville, mounted as a large wall script. It reads: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." As a cultural organization we are committed to creating dialogue through art and history narratives, to build a safer more welcoming and just community.

Museums have a role as a facilitator to promote conversation and address the challenges of our community. The Museum offers explorations of our shared history through academic research, community narratives, transparency, collaboration, diversity and inclusion through meaningful conversations. Our Southside Virginia communities have a complex racial history that reveals a difficult truth: the ideology glorifying racism did not die with the abolition of slavery, but continues today. Museums have a role in addressing the difficult problems our society needs to address.

The DMFAH remains committed to our mission "to enrich the lives of all through the arts and through history" by diversifying our museum—its art collection, exhibitions, programs, and staff. We acknowledge our shared humanity, and we are thankful for our city's leadership during this pandemic and times of uncertainty. We affirm that it is important to break down the inequities present in our society today.

The DMFAH will continue to work to be a place of inspiration, learning, equity, contemplation, conversation, and community for all. The Danville Museum of Fine Arts and History is committed to providing a safe space for each individual who enters its Museum doors and its campus. When we thrive as individuals, we thrive as a region. We hope that you will share your stories with us and provide a platform where all voices can be heard. We remain optimistic that we will all stand together to collaborate on a future built by mutual respect, empathy and unity.

The DMFAH looks forward to welcoming you back to your museum soon.

Respectfully Submitted  
DMFAH Board of Directors, Executive Director and Staff