



New York State Teachers' Retirement System

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June 12, 2020

Colleagues,

Over the last two weeks, we have witnessed events unfold across the United States in response to the continued presence of systemic racism facing the Black community. We have Black members of our family who are in pain. NYSTRS is committed to supporting our family members during these trying times and going forward. We see you. We hear you. We stand with you.

The national conversation on race, diversity and respect is one in which NYSTRS must participate. Building a better society requires each one of us to actively engage. We are each personally accountable for creating a culture of acceptance and inclusion. As such, we must commit to actively and respectfully address racism, bias or intolerance when we see it. I ask that each of us reaffirm our commitment to our values of diversity and respect.

Diversity

Respect the uniqueness of each individual.

Recognize the value in the differences we bring to the workplace.

Contribute to the culture of inclusiveness.

Respect

Treat others with dignity.

Set aside differences to achieve common goals.

In order to continue to effect change, it is incumbent on us to have meaningful, empathetic and sometimes uncomfortable conversations about race, personal experiences, biases and different perspectives. In this regard, we will hold a five-week series titled, "It's Time to Talk: Forums on Race". The series moderator is Rick Caldwell. Many of us have met Rick. This is an opportunity for introspection and personal development.

In addition, we currently have a number of ongoing initiatives to enhance our diversity, inclusion and outreach efforts. NYSTRS is in the late stages of recruiting for a Diversity Officer; we are establishing an employee resource group; and we are compiling a list of resources for personal engagement and education. Additional information about these ongoing initiatives and the "It's Time to Talk" series will be forthcoming shortly.

Thank you for committing to be a part of the solution and working to make NYSTRS an inclusive organization.