

## **TOGETHER, WE STAND UNITED FOR CHANGE**

The events during the past weeks following George Floyd's death have left all of us at HCC experiencing a range of emotions from grief to outrage. They remind us of the systemic racism that continues to plague our country. We see how the history of oppression of Black and Brown people in America continues to result in discrimination, injustice, police brutality, and murder. The cruelty so casually displayed in the video of Mr. Floyd's death renders us speechless.

This is unacceptable and must stop now! As a community organization that works primarily with people of color and immigrants, we witness the suffering of the entire community. 98% of our constituents are black and 100% of our staff are people of color; we are listening to them and offering as much support as possible. We especially support the protestors and those fighting for social justice around the country who put themselves on the line to hold our society accountable

We know that societal change is often built on the pain and outrage of moments such as the one we are experiencing. This affront to our humanity reinforces the need for greater diversity and inclusion in our communities, neighborhoods and workplaces; it reaffirms HCC's mission and strengthens our determination to be a voice for those whose voices are often ignored. We will continue to assist our staff, constituents and young people to develop influential voices, to stand up for themselves, and to become leaders who can help change our world and make it a better place for all citizens. It is what we have done for 38 years, and we will do it in the future.

Being Black and living in America feels increasingly difficult. We are trying to survive two deadly viruses at the same time: Covid-19 and racism. We must be counted by completing the Census 2020. While we may be tired, we must make our voices heard by voting this year. Voting is not guaranteed to immediately resolve inequities Black people experience every day in this country, but no change will occur unless we elect leaders who are accountable to Black communities and who understand that we need an equitable, just society.

In Solidarity,

Dr. Andre K. Peck,  
Executive Director, Haitian-American Community Coalition, Inc.