From: Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
To: bbethune@cityofmyrtlebeach.com
Subject: [External]Message From Karen Riordan: Sad. Heartbroken. Angry.
Date: Thursday, June 11, 2020 1:22:11 PM

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From the Desk of Karen Riordan

Sad. Heartbroken. Angry.

These words don't even come close to expressing the feelings we have about the killing of George Floyd and the racial injustice that we know exists in our country, our state and in our own community.

The Myrtle Beach Area Chamber condemns discrimination, exclusion, and marginalization based on race and ethnicity in our community and anywhere in the world. And we stand with those peacefully protesting and speaking up to have their

voices heard as they march for justice.

The Grand Strand community, like our nation, is engaged in a conversation that has been building for generations. And as uncomfortable as that may be, we see this as an opportunity to engage in honest dialogue. This moment calls for us to speak up, stand for justice and use this time to listen, get engaged and educated about what steps we can take to create positive change.

To create change, we must first look inward and ask: What do we need to learn and unlearn, as individuals and as organizations? How can we be better employers and leaders? How can we provide equitable opportunities in our companies?

For 80 years, our mission has been to promote, protect and improve our community.

Improving the community means more than helping our businesses survive and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. It means we will lend our voices, our leadership, our business skills and our financial resources to help our community heal and create more opportunities for businesses owned by individuals from underrepresented and marginalized groups to thrive in the Grand Strand.

The chamber's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council's primary mission is to promote growth and enhance community awareness about the value and advantages of creating and sustaining diverse and inclusive businesses and workplace environments. Our goals are to encourage entrepreneurship, support the growth and development of businesses owned by individuals from underrepresented and marginalized groups, cultivate diversity leadership by providing resources and services for our diverse business community and help the community recognize the importance of all consumers.

The council is in the final stages of crafting a comprehensive diversity and inclusion strategy focused on increasing the number of minority-owned businesses in the chamber, and providing robust employer education opportunities for all business owners to learn about and implement inclusive and equitable strategies to support today's diverse work environment.

We can and will do better within our sphere of influence to provide more access to opportunity within our community.

Fostering justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion is an active process. We are still learning. The Myrtle Beach Area Chamber is committed to doing the work.

Join us.

Karen Riordan
President & CEO
Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce

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