

## **Statement Against Racism**

Northwest Indiana African American Alliance (NWIAAA)

October 12, 2019

Definitions are important. Without an agreed-upon understanding of what words mean, we cannot communicate effectively. Ibram X Kindi sets out clear definitions in “*How to Be an Antiracist*” (2019)

“Racism is a powerful collection of racist policies that lead to racial inequity and are substantiated by racist ideas. . . . A racist idea is any idea that suggests one racial group is inferior or superior to another racial group in any way.” Antiracist ideas hold that racial groups are equals and that all of their apparent differences and inequities are caused by racist policies. . . . A policy is any law, rule, procedure, process, regulation, or guideline, written or unwritten that governs people. . . . A racist policy is any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between racial groups. An antiracist policy is any measure that produces or sustains racial equity between racial groups. . . . [A] racist is one who supports a racist policy through their action or inaction or by expressing a racist idea”. . . . To the extent that one supports racist ideas and policies, one is a racist and to the extent that one actively opposes racist ideas and policies, one is an antiracist.

There is no scientific or factual basis for believing the racist idea that one race is inferior or superior to any other. Racism is social cancer. Left unchallenged, it grows. Silence is a friend to racism because the absence of opposition denotes acceptance, which in turn perpetuates racist ideas and supports racist policies. Racism spreads when there is no opposition and shrinks in the face of challenge.

The racial inequities caused by slavery and Jim Crow and our failure as a nation to address these disparities have widened the racial divide. The current President of the United States began his election campaign by accusing Mexico of “sending criminals and rapists to the United States”. He attempted to ban all Muslims from entering the country. He argued that Neo-Nazis and self-proclaimed white supremacists in the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville in August 2017 were morally equivalent to the anti racist protesters. He created the inhumane policies of family separation at the Mexican-American border and the caging of children.

This President continually expresses racist ideas and has implemented policies which have significantly increased the inequities borne by black and brown people as well as other marginalized people in this country. His unabashed public diatribes exacerbate irrational fears and stoke racial hatred. Two years after Charlottesville, white supremacist violence against communities of color, religious minorities, and other marginalized groups continue under this administration’s watch.

The Northwest Indiana African American Alliance (NWIAAA) calls out and condemns the racist statements and behaviors of the current administration, and the hostilities that are spawned as a direct result of these actions.

The NWIAAA support and heralds the promise of America's highest ideal that all men and women are created equal. We strongly believe that vocal and vigorous opposition to racism is critical to ensure a healthy democracy and an enduring America.

The NWIAAA calls on all of our friends, neighbors and all who trust in the promise of America to speak out and condemn expressions of racist ideas. We call upon you to stand up and be counted in our effort to protect our country by insisting that racist policies be undone without exception.

The NWIAAA stands for an America where all people are actually treated equally and where the inequities between racial groups which resulted from racist policies are remedied. Racist statements are unAmerican and unacceptable. Silence in the face of racism should not be acceptable either. Silence in response to racist statements and racist policies is tacit approval which perpetuates racist inequities. NWIAAA's message is "Speak up and speak out"! And VOTE! EVERY vote counts!!