



National Association of State Directors
of
Developmental Disabilities Services

The National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) condemns the murder of George Floyd and the many other Black Americans who have lost their lives in similar circumstances. We stand in solidarity with others across our great land who are giving voice to our collective need to address – finally and thoroughly – the institutional biases and racism that plagues our country. We stand with the black community and all communities of color in demanding a universal resolve to live up to the values of our nation *that all people are created equal, with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*

As an organization, NASDDDS has long been committed to making sure that individuals with disabilities have the same opportunities for a good life as any other person. As we reflect on the events of the past few months and, most acutely, since Memorial Day, we recognize now that this goal is simply **NOT GOOD ENOUGH**. With the high intersection of disability, communities of color, poverty, and health care disparities, we can no longer strive for “the same degree as others” since, for so many, equal treatment under the law does not exist. Individuals with disabilities and the men and women who have chosen a career of service to support them deserve better and NASDDDS fully commits to listening, learning, and – most importantly – acting. In the coming days, the NASDDDS Board of Directors will help us chart our course to acting, as an organization – both internal and external to NASDDDS - to address the disparities that exist in our systems, based on race or ethnicity, as experienced by the people we support and their families, as well as those who support them. We cannot do this alone and will need to draw heavily from our members and from the many communities they touch to help us navigate these waters.

The institutions that have stymied true equality for individuals with disabilities are not just bricks and mortar. They also manifest in the continued unjust and discriminatory mistreatment and implicit and explicit biases that riddle daily life for so many in our nation. Before our shift in content due to COVID, our conference theme for this year was built around the Maya Angelou quote: *“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”* If we are honest with ourselves, we know that our country has known better for far too long without doing better – This must end today and we must all unite in ending racial injustices once and for all.