

Dear SEI Team,

I am proud to have been part of Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. (SEI) since 1998. I am proud of the work we have done. What I am not proud of is that I, as a leader, and our company under my leadership has not worked hard enough to see our country and examine its history and policies from an equity lens.

We have not done enough to ensure that our work is equitable and representative of other cultures. We do not have enough diversity on our team at any level. This includes missed opportunities to support equity in the spaces where we are able. We could and should have done better at every level of our organizational implementation from hiring practices, our approaches to the work we do, how we approach community engagement, and how we assess organizations. All of our work would be and can be strengthened using an equity lens and applying that in practical ways to how we approach our work.

Using an equity lens in our work to improve people's lives by strengthening organization includes understanding that our country was formed from a white supremacy world view. It also includes the recognition that America throughout our history up to today has afforded me and other white people privileges that are denied to our neighbors and friends.

The disparities between white America and Black America are stark. This is not just health disparities. It includes disparities in wealth, education, housing, and job opportunities. Further, the systems, institutions, and policies enacted by predominantly white people in power, deny minorities including Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), LGBTQ+, and persons with disabilities the human rights, civil rights and the dignity and respect that everyone in our country deserves.

Racism and oppression continue to be at the root of so much suffering, death and ugliness in our county. This includes the inability to move through society and our streets safely. It results in trauma, daily acts

of micro-aggression, fear, stress, and death. Today, we see the impacts of institutional racism in the disproportionate numbers of minorities who are sick, dying or who have died due to the disparities of who is disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

As long as this remains acceptable and true, America's founding ideals of a people who are promised life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness will remain out of reach for our brothers and sisters. Our country, and we are diminished as a result.

America is also weakened when we fail to acknowledge the gifts and talents of all Americans. America is weakened when Black, Indigenous and Other People of Color fail to see themselves reflected in their teachers, their politicians, and the changemakers in our society.

SEI can and must do more to ensure that our company stands for the rights of all Americans and actively works to be anti-racist and a force for change against racism. We must speak about it, we must act consistently with intention, acknowledging our biases and privilege, and we must fundamentally change how we work, and who we work with to broaden our lens and increase the impact we can have on the systems and people with which we work.

I look forward to developing a shared vision for SEI with you. I welcome all feedback and will accept it in any form, as it is most important to hear and recognize when I and others act in a racist manner. Too often, open discussions about race, racism, and oppression are shut down through defensiveness, a focus on our own feelings instead of the feelings of others, and the sorting of people into those who are racist and those who are not.

I have come to realize that at any given moment, I may act, think, or speak in a way that is racist. Focusing on how to recognize and change myself, while working to change systems, institutions, and policies is the path that I believe will move myself and SEI forward to that ideal of being an anti-racist organization.

I ask you to join me in this work, and that we all have the wisdom, grace, and courage to change ourselves and SEI to realize the force for social justice and equity that we can be.

Sincerely,

Kelly