



## **AICP's Commitment to Drive Change**

As a community, we are devastated by the senseless loss of life and the racism being brought to the forefront of the collective consciousness of our country. Our hearts go out to the many families and communities that have suffered because of this, most recently George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, but we cannot stop there. It has unfortunately taken tragedy to shine a light on the continued inequalities that exist for the Black community. Nonetheless, the headlines have shaken us out of complacency.

Now is a time when social injustice is taking center stage in our cultural psyche, and we cannot ignore it. We must advance this moment and not allow it to become just another part of the news cycle. We know that we can do better, and we must as business leaders.

AICP is committed to helping our community make social change a priority and actively participating in our own progress. We must all make a true commitment to educating ourselves on the historical context of racism and how it continues to affect the Black community and our society today. We must double down on our commitment to supporting the many existing organizations and programs designed to create equitable opportunities for people of color. We must lean into the discomfort that may accompany this moment and strive to challenge our own companies and leadership if we are to create space for more diverse voices within our industry. There is room for everyone.

We know this an incredibly traumatic time in the world, but we're hopeful it becomes the wake up call we need to create lasting change. We encourage you to have difficult, and constructive conversations with your families, employees, and clients.

Let us continue to use our talents for public service messages that amplify the voices of change. Let us approach our collaborations with clients and brands with the resolve to answer the call for accountability. Let us work to create a more diverse industry to ensure that we aren't blindly excluding the people and stories that don't resemble us.

As we move from this week of national mourning and outrage, we are postponing AICP WEEK for a week and ask the industry to use this time for reflection and commitment to act with greater purpose and help those who need our support. We are going to create the opportunity for us all to do so.

We will resume with our plans for AICP Week June 16th-18th, and it should be a reminder that as an industry we celebrate work that pushes us to do better, and be better. The content we honor must be celebrated in this light — because we as people need to do better, and only then can we encourage our clients, our partners, and our colleagues to aspire to stand for something greater with our craft and creativity.

While we reflect, let us go beyond seeing racism only as violence and epithets and force ourselves to reexamine our own lives, communities, and businesses. Now is the time to commit to contribute to causes that help make a difference... with your time, your expertise, and your resources if you can.

This is not a choice.

This is not a “pause moment.”

This is a forever accelerate moment.

We are the gatekeepers of an entire industry, and we have an obligation to drive towards our collective social good.

If we are serious about change, we have work to do.