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With the world upended by yet another outrageously unjust racially motivated killing, and ensuing protests, we at Inclusive Arts Vermont are reflecting on how we as an organization can do better. We are feeling a full range of emotions alongside you. We are mourning the loss of George Floyd and countless others who have been the victims of violent racism. We are saddened by the losses of lives caused by COVID-19, which are disproportionately higher in the disability and POC communities.

**Our organization was a creation of the disability rights movement. We were made to ensure that, through the arts, the voices of people with disabilities are celebrated and heard.** We work towards that end every day, but can do so much more. As our friends at Vermont Arts Council said, arts organizations “have a deep responsibility in the present moment, to stand against hatred and racial injustice. We often say that the arts promote empathy, that a great painting, sculpture, or poem has the power to lift us above our divisions and inspire us to transcend our personal point of view, to stand in the shoes of another. Now is the time to be true to those values.”

**Disability does not discriminate.** It affects all populations regardless of income, sexual orientation, location, or skin color. We recognize that people of color are particularly underrepresented in the arts, and within our own organization. We own this lacking and want you to know that we are committed to changing it throughout all of our systems: programming, messaging, staff, and board alike.

We believe that all people are whole and perfect exactly as they are - and that includes the color of someone’s skin. Our organization often says that the creative process creates space for bravery, authenticity, connection, and joy. We also talk a lot about making magic. **Right now, the world needs bravery and connection and change more than ever, but it won’t happen through magic.** Change happens through intentional action and work.

Inclusive Arts Vermont sees the need for change. We know that we cannot change the entire world, but we can affect our circle. We can do more, do better, and while we should have acted sooner, we’re going to now. What that exactly looks like yet we aren’t sure, but know that our staff will do everything we can to make sure that all voices are *truly* included in our programming and messaging.

**We want to use our platform to celebrate and amplify the voices and creativity of artists of color with disabilities.** If you have resources or thoughts to share, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us at [info@inclusivartsvermont.org](mailto:info@inclusivartsvermont.org). We would love to listen to and learn from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie Miller", is written on a light-colored, slightly textured background.

Katie Miller, Executive Director

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[Thank you for your continued support!](#)

The mission of Inclusive Arts Vermont is to use the magic of the arts to engage the capabilities and enhance the confidence of children and adults with disabilities. We do this through education, exhibition, and capacity building programs for teachers, students, artists, and organizations.

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