



June 9, 2020

Cameron supports BAG's Declaration -- "Racism is a Public Health Crisis"

Cameron Community Ministries is a community outreach center located in the Lyell-Otis neighborhood, where 98% of residents live in poverty. Our mission is to provide hope to our community through emergency services, engagement, education, and empowerment. Cameron supports the Greater Rochester Black Agenda Group's May 19th Declaration "RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS."

Because we serve Rochesterians of all ages, races, and ethnicities every day in our soup kitchen, after school programs, and clothing house, we recognize that we have a role to play in the fight for racial justice in Rochester. The Black Agenda Group writes, "Racism causes persistent discrimination in housing, education, healthcare, employment, criminal justice, business, and economic mobility. There is an emerging body of research that demonstrates racism as a social determinant of health."

At Cameron, we see the intersection of these issues daily in how they impact our clients' lives. We serve folks hot meals; we educate the youth; we provide clothing and hygiene items; we have a social worker on staff to help individuals navigate complex issues. We can do more.

As an organization, we aim to provide hope to our community through emergency services, engagement, education, and empowerment. It can be difficult to empower a community when the reality is that structural racism is deeply rooted in Rochester and our country. Our strategic planning process is currently underway and we will be working to incorporate racial justice into our mission and actions. This will include:

- Educational opportunities for the Board and staff members;
- Access to books and speakers that Cameron kids can see themselves in as well as social justice activities as part of their curriculum;
- Efforts to ensure diverse representation on our Board, committees, and staff.
- and much more.

We are committed to this work, an ongoing endeavor to make Cameron and our community a better and more equitable place every day.

A huge thank you to the Greater Rochester Black Agenda Group for their declaration and leadership. We hope that other nonprofit organizations and public officials will review and endorse the declaration and join the work of pursuing racial justice and equity.