Dear Friends,

As an agency founded early in the AIDS epidemic, we are especially sensitive to discrimination, prejudice, and societal injustice. It has been our core belief that all people deserve equal treatment, dignity and respect. We at Food For Thought were shocked and saddened by the tragic killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, as well as many other recent incidents involving the deaths of African Americans and other people of color.

Here in Sonoma County, we see bias and disadvantage playing out in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 95% of youths infected in Sonoma County are Latino, while, 64% of adult cases are Latino. In comparison, 27% of county residents are Latino. This is a reflection of systemic issues around race, poverty and lack of access to healthy food, medical care and adequate housing on the part of underserved communities.

We agree that this is not a time to be silent. There have been a number of peaceful protests in recent years, as well as the founding of the Black Lives Matter movement. None of this has led to meaningful change, despite the pledges of our public officials to address these issues. It is no surprise that people have taken to the streets to express their concern and outrage.

At Food For Thought, our focus is on basic needs, providing healthy food to those who are ill and most need it. We work closely with health care and social service agencies throughout Sonoma County and California to address issues of health, lack of access to housing, and availability of health and medically appropriate food.

We understand that we must all do more to break systemic racism and bigotry.

Together, we can create a world where true equity is possible.

In Service,

Ron Karp, Executive Director