

June 3, 2020

The members of the Tennessee Arts Academy and Tennessee Arts Academy Foundation family are saddened and appalled at the events of the past few days surrounding the reprehensible death of George Floyd and others before him in the African American community. As teachers and artists, we join forces with everyone who believes in equality, justice, and tolerance. We stand together with those who are hurting and with those who face injustices every day.

Rather than giving in to hopelessness and despair, now is the time for the arts education community to come together, using this moment to confront old assumptions and lead with new vision and clarity. Every day Tennessee's visual and performing arts educators work to change society for the better through the young people they teach and send into the world. We must stand ready to recommit ourselves to use all of the qualities that the arts so richly convey in order to foster true understanding, compassion, acceptance, and empathy for others. Let us translate these ideals into real actions and teach each and every student who passes our way to respect, value, and honor all life.

On behalf of everyone involved with TAA and TAAF, we encourage and challenge you to boldly infuse your teaching with light and love. Together, we can use the arts to change the world.

Stephen Coleman

President

Tennessee Arts Academy Foundation

E. Frank Bluestein

Executive Director

Tennessee Arts Academy