



JOINT STATEMENT OF KANSAS CITY METROPOLITAN BAR ASSOCIATION & KANSAS CITY METROPOLITAN BAR FOUNDATION

Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association and Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation unequivocally condemn racism and discrimination in all forms.

KCMBA/KCMBF's purposes include promoting diversity and inclusion in the legal profession and promoting access to the judicial system for all persons. Consistent with our mission, we are committed to all efforts to eliminate racial disparity, injustice, and inequality for everyone.

As lawyers, we are defenders of the rule of law, and we believe that application of the rule of law must be fair to everyone. KCMBA supports and appreciates those members of law enforcement who work to protect everyone equally, but we are deeply troubled whenever basic human rights are blatantly violated. We also respect and praise protesters who choose to exercise their constitutional rights to be heard, and support nonviolent demonstrations to effect change. We are particularly proud to serve a community in which so many have united as one, to let their voices be heard.

KCMBA/KCMBF have worked within their missions to support racial equality and equal justice and to promote diversity in the legal profession in several ways, including:

- KCMBA's Diversity Committee (now Diversity Section) was created in 2003 to advance and support a more diverse legal community. Beginning in 2016, that Section created an annual award to celebrate and encourage by example significant contributions to diversity and inclusion in the legal profession;
- KCMBA's Managing Partners Committee in 2004 entered into the Diversity Initiative Action Plan in which Kansas City's firms committed, by agreeing upon seven specific and detailed objectives, to increase the participation of under-represented racial and ethnic groups in the local practice of law;
- KCMBA's annual Heartland Diversity Legal Job Fair was created in 2005 to actively recruit and provide job opportunities for diverse law students and new lawyers from all over the country to enhance diversity in the legal system that serves the greater community;
- KCMBA's Unity Event was started in 2018, to celebrate and encourage diversity in our legal community;
- In 2019, KCMBF created a program for underrepresented students from area high schools to participate in the Student Law Academy, a paid internship providing opportunity and a pathway to a career in the law;
- KCMBA partners with Kansas City's five diversity Bar Associations (Asian American Bar Association of Kansas City, Association for Women Lawyers of Greater Kansas City, Hispanic Bar Association of Greater Kansas City, Jackson County Bar Association and Kansas City Lesbian Gay

and Allied Lawyers), to support their memberships and organizations as a whole, and we fully support their efforts to effect change against injustice in all forms; and

- We hope you will look for our the next issue of our magazine, the *KC Counselor*, that will feature a cover story on racial injustice, coming out in early August.

Importantly, KCMBA/KCMBF believes in providing continuing legal education promoting equality and eliminating racism and bias. We invite you to join us for a very important presentation, *Race, Equity, and Inclusion in Law Firms - Exploring the Way Forward* on September 16, 2020 with featured speaker Dr. Robin DiAngelo, author of the New York Times current #1 bestselling nonfictionbook, "White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism." Click [here](#) for more information.

KCMBA and KCMBF remain committed to efforts seeking to end injustice and inequality, as we draw upon our strengths as listeners, problem solvers, and defenders of the rule of law to continue the conversation necessary to affect systemic change, resulting in true liberty and justice for all. But we can do more. KCMBA members are encouraged to contact KCMBA at (816) 474-4322 or info@kcmba.org with your thoughts and ideas on how KCMBA/KCMBF can continue to support racial equality and equal justice and to promote diversity in the legal profession.



Athena Dickson
KCMBA President



Peter Goss
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