

For Immediate Release

**UNITED WAY OF DELAWARE LAUNCHES *DELAWARE RACIAL EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE FUND*
TO ADVANCE STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS SYSTEMIC RACISM IN DELAWARE**

Wilmington, DE (June 24, 2020) --- United Way of Delaware (UWDE) today announced that it has established the *Delaware Racial Equity & Social Justice Fund* (the Fund) as part of an integrated, statewide effort with other nonprofits, grassroots organizations and the community-at-large to develop and advocate for strategies and policies that address systemic racism in Delaware.

The Fund, which will be housed at and managed by UWDE, is the first action of the newly formed Delaware Racial Equity & Social Justice Collaborative, a group of nonprofits and community-based organizations organized by UWDE as part of a nationwide movement for racial equity and social justice, sparked by the murder of George Floyd and other African Americans. The Fund will be supported through individual, foundation, government and corporate contributions. Donors will be asked to commit time, knowledge, and skills, as well financial resources. Allocation decisions will be made by a community-based steering committee of the Collaborative.

Commenting on the Fund, Michelle Taylor, President and Chief Executive Officer of United Way of Delaware, said, "In every corner of Delaware, people of goodwill are stepping forward to say, 'enough' to the inequities in education, healthcare, housing, economic opportunity, access to nutritious food, and yes, law enforcement that have held our state back for generations. For decades, United Way of Delaware has been fighting for those who are marginalized by systemic racism. We are proud to now build on this tradition by working collaboratively with community-based partners to further advance the cause of racial equity and social justice. The Delaware Racial Equity & Social Justice Fund will help provide resources for this work."

Don Baker, Chief Executive Officer of the Forum to Advance Minorities in Engineering, Inc. (FAME) and a partner in the Collaborative, said, "We cannot 'program' our way out of centuries of economic and structural racism alone. Comprehensive and well-funded strategic solutions can be a silver lining that is born out of this pandemic and a literal cry for equity and justice. The Delaware Racial Equity & Social Justice Fund will make it a point to invest in grassroots, community-led initiatives that empower disadvantaged citizens and root out the causes of racial and social inequities."

Taylor said the Fund will work with community stakeholders to:

- Address root causes of racial and social inequities
- Foster courageous conversations and actions regarding racial equity and social justice
- Increase engagement and influence of grassroots groups and others mobilizing for action
- Mobilize disenfranchised communities to create awareness and action
- Actively engage youth and young adults

MORE

UNITED WAY OF DELAWARE LAUNCHES *DELAWARE RACIAL EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE FUND--2*

- Develop collective messages based on dialogue with grassroots groups
- Promote healthy connections among diverse community groups
- Map racial equity and social justice initiatives in Delaware
- Ensure the Collaborative operates statewide, inclusive of local engagement
- Develop procedures for joint accountability, transparency, and communication amongst investment partners

Rick Deadwyler, U.S. East Region Leader, Government & Industry Affairs for Corteva Agriscience and Chair-Elect of the UWDE's Board of Directors, said, "We are living in historic times. America is aching for change and Delaware is no exception. Through the Delaware Racial Equity & Social Justice Fund at United Way of Delaware, we aim to seize this moment as the opportunity of our generation to effect meaningful and lasting improvements in racial equity and social justice."

Deadwyler added, "We need every sector--young people, civic leaders, politicians, educators, business people, labor leaders, faith leaders, nonprofits and concerned individuals from all political affiliations--to join us in this work by contributing to the Fund and by taking an active role in community-based efforts to address issues of racial equity and social justice."

Those interested in being part of the work of the Delaware Racial Equity & Social Justice Collaborative and/or supporting the Fund may contact Michelle Taylor at mtaylor@uwde.org.

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