



*The executive board of the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce unanimously approved this message on behalf of the Spartanburg Chamber, Spartanburg Economic Futures Group, Spartanburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Spartanburg Downtown Development Partnership and OneSpartanburg.*

Racial inequities are a daily reality for millions of people across the United States, and recent acts of violence against Black people exacerbated by an inequitable global health pandemic have brought them to the forefront of our nation's consciousness. At the Spartanburg Chamber,

## WE FIND OURSELVES ASKING: WHAT ROLE DO BUSINESS LEADERS PLAY IN BUILDING A MORE JUST SOCIETY?

As a business community, we must recognize this moment as a movement toward an equitable civilization. We must be part of the leadership demanding systemic change inside and outside our organizations.

Perhaps your company has issued a statement, reinforced your corporate values, or even donated to support a cause. Perhaps you have started a dialogue with your team, ensured your employees have time and space to process, or perhaps you have been quiet, unsure of what to do at this moment.

Just as we have work to do in our communities, we have work to do in our workplaces. As business leaders, it is time to evaluate our policies and procedures to uncover and remove unintended barriers, to use our platforms and power to create fair representation, and to expand our networks and economic influence to support Black lives.

It is time to build an economically inclusive environment in which all Spartanburg's people have opportunity to thrive. Spartanburg's Black and Hispanic populations earn less, own fewer businesses and are two to three times as likely to struggle with the grips of systematic poverty. These economic disparities are unacceptable. Spartanburg will not move forward if any of her people are left behind.

Intended and unintended racism has a crippling effect on economic, business and tourism development. The Spartanburg Chamber has long committed to diversity and economic inclusion efforts. This year, with the help of our DEI Champions and Inclusion Council, we strengthened those efforts by funding the creation and implementation of a DEI strategic plan to drive bold outcomes both within our organization and within our county.

**As business leaders, we must all commit to this work. Our community's future depends on it.**

### OUR ACTIONS

- Created an **Inclusion Council** to ensure we serve and represent Spartanburg's diverse business community
- Began offering **MBEs** an entry membership to the Spartanburg Chamber that lessens financial barriers to participation
- Compiled The **Pipeline Project** to promote more diverse membership on area boards
- Trained **more than 200 leaders** in diversity and inclusion in the workplace and the board room
- Partnered with the Greenville Chamber to provide Spartanburg businesses access to the **Minority Business Accelerator**
- Hired Nika White Consulting and convened DEI Champions to develop a **DEI Strategic Plan**
- Announced Dr. Russell W. Booker as **Diversity & Economic Inclusion Consultant** to lead the implementation of the plan

### ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

- **Train employees and leadership** in diversity, equity and inclusion
- **Survey team members** to assess your organization's culture
- Consider **strategic hiring practices** to ensure equal access to opportunity
- Create **representative boards and committees**
- Build a **supplier diversity program**
- **Engage a DEI Consultant** to embed DEI into all aspects of your business

The Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce welcomes your feedback and ideas. Please direct comments to [asmith@spartanburgchamber.com](mailto:asmith@spartanburgchamber.com)