

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LGBTQ Organizations Stand in Solidarity with Black Lives Matter

December 4th, 2015 (Minneapolis) -- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities know that liberation is not a given; it is fought for. We remember it was trans women of color who led the riots at Stonewall, catalyzing a national movement. Before Stonewall, trans people who were getting arrested spurred the Compton Cafeteria Riots in 1966. We remember the White Night Riots after America's justice system failed Harvey Milk. We remember that just two years ago, we rallied to narrowly defeat a constitutional ban on marriage equality in Minnesota. As LGBTQ people from many races, many religions, and many colors, we know what it is to stand up for our inherent worth, our identities, our bodies, and to speak out against discrimination, harassment and violence. Countless times LGBTQ people and organizations have organized, agitated and taken action to demand institutional equity and respect for our lives.

We are called to stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter and all struggles to fight racism, to ensure that the killing of Black people gets proper investigation, and to call attention to the pervasive culture of white supremacy in the United States. What happened to Jamar Clark — and has been happening across this country to Black and Brown people for much too long — is not justice. This must change.

We recognize that Black people in America, some of whom are LGBTQ, are systematically oppressed and we stand together affirming that Black Lives Matter. As LGBTQ organizations, we acknowledge that while our work is bound up with movements for racial healing and justice, and many members of our organizations and communities have shown up in support of this movement, we historically haven't done enough to align our missions with work for racial justice. With this letter, we

want to publicly state our support in a unified way, and ask our friends and supporters to step forward with us.

As allies to this movement we believe that our first job is to listen and to ask how we can support Black Lives Matter, Neighborhoods Organizing for Change, the NAACP, and other organizations taking the lead to end racially biased violence here in Minnesota. Our job is to listen first, and then to act. We are not coming in recommending strategies. We are curious, open and learning. We are educating our communities and our organizations on why it is important for LGBTQ communities to stand with Black communities — why our politics, our values and our liberation are bound together. Minnesota has some of the worst racial disparities across socio-economic, health and environmental conditions. We are committed for the long haul of actively working to create a more equitable state.

We are reminded and hold true the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies ... but the silence of our friends.” We will not be silent, and we will not turn our backs on the Black community during this urgent time. We ask that members of our many LGBTQ communities step into this commitment with us – the commitment to listen, and to act.

OutFront Minnesota

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RECLAIM

Faded Productions

Twin Cities People of Color Pride

Family Tree Clinic

Minnesota Transgender Health Coalition

Rare Productions

20% Theatre Company Twin Cities

Shades of Yellow

Rainbow Health Initiative

Gender Justice

GLBT Host Home Program - Avenues for Homeless Youth

Twin Cities Pride

Transforming Families

Minnesota Two Spirit Society

Minnesota AIDS Project

Bisexual Organizing Project

KFAI Radio

Transgender Health Services at U of M Program
in Human Sexuality

Café Southside

- * If you are an LGBTQ organization and are interested in signing on to this letter please contact Jennifer Houston at jhouston@outfront.org