



What can we do?

BOMA/Suburban Chicago

Kimberly A. DeFily, RPA, President

When news accounts of police-related violence against Black citizens shook the country, it was felt particularly hard by members of BOMA/Suburban Chicago. The first question members asked was, what can we do?

To that end, the Board of Directors published a statement condemning racism and advocating for change. In addition, the Board created a standing committee whose mission was to take the energy created by the recent tragedies and to use what had happened as a way for all of us to learn and grow.

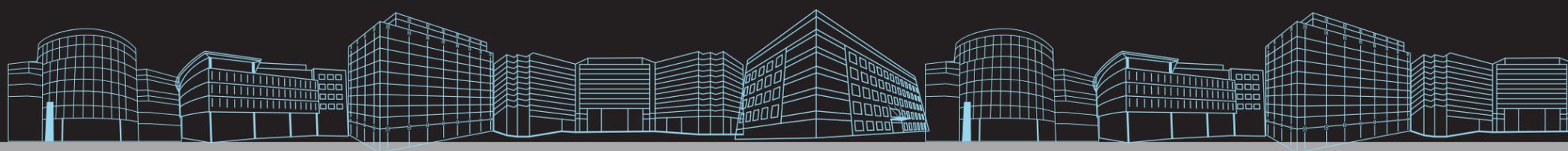
As an association, we are committed to building a diverse organization that allows us to speak openly and to explore new ways to bring us together so that diversity, equity, and inclusion is embedded into the way we do business. BOMA/Suburban Chicago aspires to build and promote an inclusive environment that fosters collaboration, teamwork, and innovation especially for our future generations.

This special edition of the Focus Newsletter is one small step toward opening up a dialogue about diversity, equity, and inclusion. If you would like to join the Diversity and Inclusion Committee or if you have questions or comments about the ideas expressed in the newsletter, I encourage you to contact Michael Mulcrone, Executive Director, at MichaelM@BomaSuburbanChicago.com.

BOMA/Suburban Chicago is committed to building an inclusive and diverse community characterized by mutual respect and professional growth in the commercial real estate industry.

We celebrate multiple approaches and points of view, believing that diversity and adversity drive innovation, BOMA/Suburban Chicago is working to build that culture where difference is valued and everyone feels empowered through education and mentorship for all generations in the workforce.

*diversity, equity,
inclusion*



Diversity and Inclusion Statement



BOMA SUBURBAN CHICAGO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

BOMA/Suburban Chicago joins with BOMA International and the chorus of voices from across the country in condemning racism in all of its forms. Throughout BOMA's history we have championed inclusion as a core value of our association. We take pride in our members advocating for change and working to make their communities a better place.

We all have a role to play in building communities with equal protections and opportunities for all. It is time to come together across race and political party lines and take action to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all citizens. This change is overdue and needs to take place starting now. The country needs it.

To continue to advance our role and existing efforts in this endeavor, BOMA/Suburban Chicago's Board of Directors takes the following actions:

- Effective immediately, the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force is elevated to a standing committee of the Association.
- Chair: Matt Roberts, CPM | Duke Realty
- Board Liaison: Dan Flores, LEED AP | Atomic Mechanical Services
- The Diversity and Inclusion Committee (D+I) will conduct a member-wide survey to gauge members' interests in diversity and inclusion issues in order to develop relevant programs/events.
- D+I will work collaboratively with the other Association committees and task forces, in particular, Education, Emerging Leaders, Government Affairs, and Program to create programs events that support and promote diversity and inclusion.
- D+I will continue its work with BOMA/Suburban Chicago's University Outreach program.
- D+I will reach out to BOMA/Chicago's Diversity Committee and examine opportunities for collaboration.
- D+I will work with staff on publishing a special edition of Focus or Weekly Connections that would include letters from members expressing their heartfelt feelings about the issues that have been raised over the past few months and as a forum for an open dialogue.
- D+I will work with staff to develop a resources page on our website that highlights minority-owned BOMA-member companies and professional resource (e.g. books, TED talks, articles, blogs, etc.) that compliment BOMA's mission and members' needs.

The Board of Directors enthusiastically supports the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and its efforts to advocate for change, equal protections, and opportunities for all.

If you would like to join the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, please contact Michael Mulcrone at MichaelM@BomaSuburbanChicago.com.

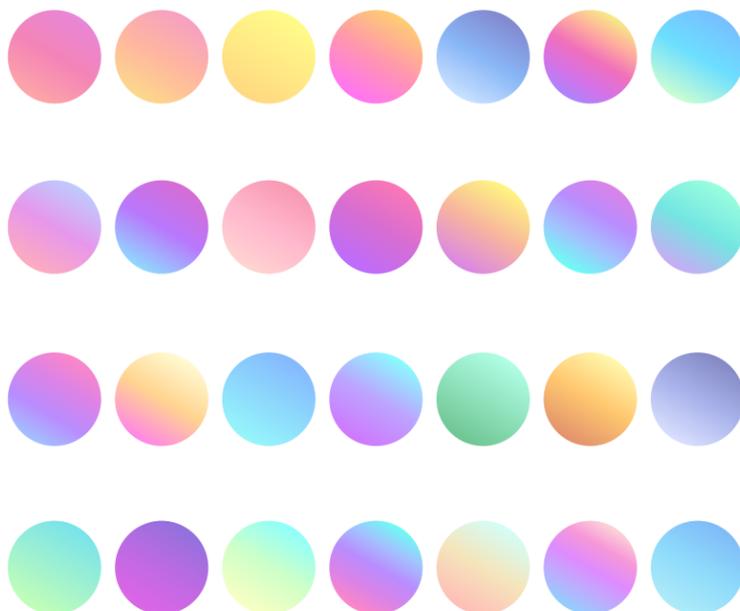


BOMA INTERNATIONAL'S DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Vision: To advocate for a welcoming community that ensures diversity and inclusion with equal opportunity and protections for all.

Mission: To promote and cultivate a diverse commercial real estate workforce at all levels that is a reflection of the communities where they reside through talent recruitment, education and training, content development and promotion, and by leading on industry diversity and inclusion initiatives with member companies and related groups.

BOMA International's Diversity & Inclusion Committee strives to identify opportunities to act as change agents in the commercial real estate industry and provide specific recommendations on how to champion diversity and inclusion (D&I) through policy development, partnership curation, talent development, recognition and education.



Executive Summary of Diversity Survey

BOMA/Suburban Chicago conducted a member survey to gauge diversity, equity, and inclusion in the suburban Chicago commercial real estate market. Our goal in conducting the survey was for every commercial real estate company leader to have insight on this issue and to take action to advance diversity and inclusion in their company and in the suburban Chicago region.

Participants

A total of 71 industry professionals from across all commercial real estate sectors participated in this survey. Our survey posed 30 questions relating to demographics, diversity, and workplace culture. Highlights and key findings of the study follow.

Company Category:

- Third Party Management: 46%
- Building Owners / Managers: 26%
- Medical Buildings: 1%
- Service Provider / Vendor: 25%

How long have you worked in CRE?

- Ten years or more: 81%
- Five years to less than ten years: 11%
- Two years to less than five years: 1%
- One to two years: 6%

Demographics

According to a recent report from CREW, women account for 77% of workers in the commercial real estate industry. This has not changed much over the last 15 years. Non-Hispanics, White, or Euro-American represent 78% of the industry. 11% are Black or African American and 8% are Latino or Hispanic American. Those individuals' roles in the organization are reported as 9% first level supervisor, 66% manager/supervisor, and 23% were not a manager or supervisor.

Workplace Diversity and Culture

National industry research indicates commercial real estate professionals do not work in diverse environments. However, over 80% of our respondents feel BOMA/Suburban Chicago is committed to diversity and inclusion, that people are respected and valued, and people do not tolerate racial, ethnic, sexual orientation and gender-based jokes.

Regarding training programs that promote understanding and mitigation of unconscious bias, 55% of the respondents said the industry has done a "good job," while 44% responded negatively.

The survey provided our members an opportunity to share additional comments or concerns regarding diversity and inclusion based on their experiences. *We felt these were important to share:*

This is still a male dominated industry. People of Color are not recruited as much as counterparts.

The question for my background only allows for 1 answer. While Brokers, Owners and Managers value my work, tenants are another story and racism is still prevalent.

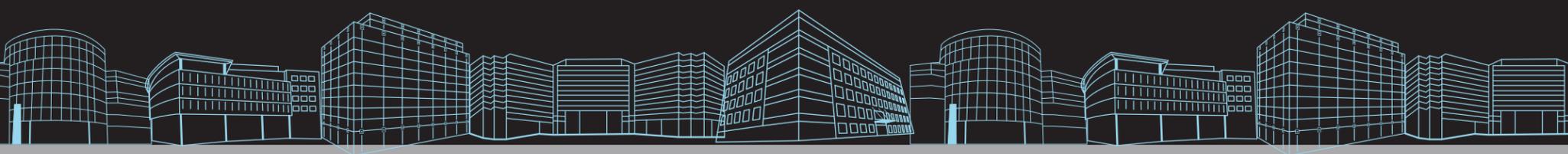
The industry has made strides to become more inclusive and diverse but still has a long way to go. It starts with providing college internships to diverse talent, including seeking talent from historically black colleges and universities, and recruiting talent from these institutions. Once hired, mentoring programs should be included to permeate throughout the industry.

In the 15+ years that I have been in the CRE industry, I have noted a growing acknowledgment of the lack of diversity in the industry. I have also noted very little progress in actually addressing the lack.

While most all instances of "blatant" racism are widely condemned, the industry still shows disparity in wages and representation of people of color, LGBTQI+ folks, and those with disabilities. We also commonly see microaggressions take place, that are not always picked up on, or properly responded to by leadership. Whiteness is clearly the default, and steps should be taken to better understand our unconscious bias, and be more intentional about valuing the work of diverse voices, and reduce the additional labor that they put in to making others feel comfortable in their presence. BOMA/SC could also work with members to better understand promotion tracks and how folks move up the corporate ladder.

I would be very interested in a survey question asking members what D&I programs they would be interested in having. D&I covers a large array of topic and it could give insight on where the association should start and interests lie.

I think that we are on the right track. I started my career in late 80's and women in commercial real estate were nonexistent especially women of color or Hispanic. We are now talking about this and feel like the Corporate world is embracing D&I within their organizations.



open letters to our membership

I don't have a direct contribution, but I want to say that I am so encouraged to see how BOMA is rising to this new challenge! This is certainly already a time of upheaval in everyone's lives, and on top of that we now have a better understanding that a significant group of people are badly hurting in a deeper way than we may have realized. Eventually we will get through the COVID-19 pandemic. But, how can we also get through the continued era of racism? As we move forward to consider new ways to approach how we as white people engage African Americans in the business world and beyond, I think the most important thing to do up front is to listen. Believe people who say they are experiencing any form of racism or racism-related aggression, be compassionate, and educate ourselves on how we can do better.

Our white voices should not be the loudest; we should take a passive role in conversation and be doing more listening than talking. There are many, many great books written on this topic, as well as educated people willing to mentor/train the rest of us on where we can do better. We need to read those books, hear those talks and identify where we can make changes to our behaviors. Many of us with white skin have loved ones and other important people in our lives who are African American and thus have directly witnessed for decades what is now (finally) coming into greater focus. I am glad people of color are speaking up loudly about their needs, and I hope we can continue to create space for their voices to be heard within our corner of the world here at BOMA/Suburban Chicago.

Thank you very much for your openness and willingness to address this issue. The more we can talk openly about this, the more we as white people can learn and adapt to these positive changes so badly needed.

Amy Stern
Property Manager

I am a woman – I am white
I am a wife – of a police officer
I am a mom – of twins
I am a grandmother – of a grandson who has autism
I am a woman – who has a career
I am a friend – of men, women, black, brown, white, straight and gay
I am an aunt – my niece is married to a woman who I love dearly
I am a daughter – my dad is a retired police officer
I am a niece – my uncle was a police officer who committed suicide
I am a woman – who is an elected official in her community
I am Human Being
I am an American

The last several months have been the most trying times in my life but I remind myself that before all I am a woman, a wife, a mom etc. Everything else comes after that. Unfortunately in today's climate I think we have lost sight of that and we are so focused on being white, black, brown, indigenous, etc. We are the UNITED States of America and every day I see us becoming more and more divided.

For me personally I have never been more conflicted. Everyone is calling upon us elected officials to Defund the Police and I am married to one of those Police Officers. I know that defunding the police is not in the best interest of the public. I know that spending funds to get our officers the resources they need to deal with the mental health issues that plague law enforcement is critical. I know that our City budgets were cut years ago and the first place they cut was mental health – what we have on our hands today is a Mental Health Crisis – both for law enforcement and the public. Police Officers, virtually overnight were turned into Social Workers, something they had zero training in. Those who struggle with Mental Health and Addiction – which go hand in hand – were put into the streets and no one knew, not residents or law enforcement, how to deal with them. Anger built, mistakes were made on all sides and add into the mix that some Police Officers just should not be Police Officers and we had a recipe for disaster.

So how do we fix it? The time is now to turn off our phones, social media and televisions and start talking. Police are trained not to talk about their emotions. The black, brown and indigenous community want their emotions, which have been building up, to be heard. That is going to be difficult but we must get both groups to the table. It will take real leaders – not leaders who add to the divide – leaders who want to fix it – to get these groups talking. We all need to remember that it is okay to have an opinion. It's okay to disagree with someone's opinion. However, we MUST do it with some respect.

As Jane Goodall said "Every individual matters. Every individual has a role to play. Every individual makes a difference."

Debby Pyznarski
Senior General Manager



I would like to thank BOMA for electing to be a part of the "conversation". Sometimes, talking it out clears away the cobwebs that are blocking clear thinking. Sometimes it opens new avenues for positive change.

1. What are you feeling in this moment?

It is unfortunate that it takes a home bound pandemic for individual citizens across the country, to acknowledge awareness of systematic racism. Complacency with ignoring the talent, experience and positive abilities of people of color has been the "go to attitude" for too long.

It has become "OK" to have one, maybe two on the staff roster. It has become "OK" to ignore, dismiss, and not consider a person of color, because they are a person of color. And, keep in mind they still must be the right color of the person.

While watching a human being die from a prolonged knee on the neck, has stirred the pot of pretense that all was well, it appears that the covers are pulled back to reveal an underlying, ugly truth. What is now being seen, is the result of what was known all along...as in, I knew this, but chose not to care or show concern. It is now being acknowledged that systems are allowed to be in existence that clearly have the purpose of blocking, denying or perpetuating a failing effort. It appears that so many were more comfortable with mindset of "they" don't know, are not trying, are so violent. Let's disregard them, they will go away. They are different.

This is the "Human Race". All created to be different. All with choices for why, when, and how. With all these differences, there is still plenty of room for shared experiences, willingness to compromise and a desire to succeed. We all still bleed. We all still cry. We all have something to contribute. We all must remember how to love and appreciate these outward differences and applaud the inner strength that will help us continue to learn, live, share wisdom, and grow as the "Human Race".

2. What does BOMA/Suburban Chicago and their membership need to do right now and for the long term to address the industry's racial disparity?

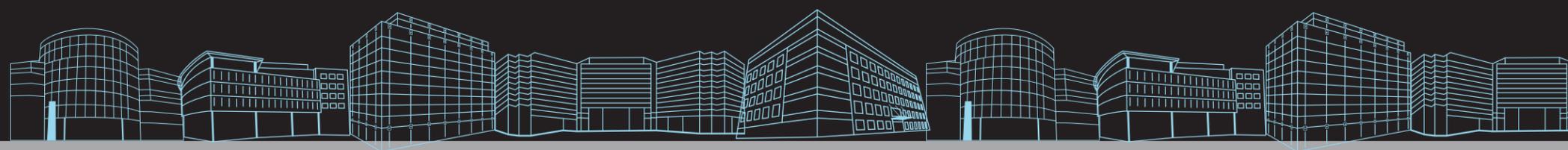
BOMA should actively seek out Minority Owned/Operated businesses. Not just the ones that have a minority staff doing all the work. Because of the practice of exclusion, these businesses may not wish to be a part of the Expos and seminars that BOMA sponsors or participates in. But an open-door invitation with shared knowledge of the benefits, can be a change that yields positive rewards.

3. Now that some industry leaders have committed themselves to change, how do you think they should be held accountable?

Committed industry leaders must be called upon to not only speak on these issues but show real and achievable plans for executing their specified changes.

Marilyn Leveritte
Property Assistant





Dear Community Members,

As the great Bob Dylan once sang, “oh the times, they are a-changin’.” Though these lyrics were written years ago, they still ring true in the present day. During these troubled times, it’s important to look back to see not only how far we’ve come, but also how our actions as community members shape the world around us. Rose Paving opened its doors in 1974 as a family-owned and operated company, and since that time we have always worked hard to give back to the surrounding communities that support us. Over the last four decades, we have had many opportunities to reinvest in our local infrastructure with incredibly positive results.

In recent years, we have committed ourselves to engage in an ongoing conversation about diversity in the workplace and how that commitment enriches the communities in which we live and thrive. One of our most effective efforts has been with Center for Companies That Care, an organization that since 2002 has been “dedicated to ensuring social sustainability and improving the lives of individuals, families, and communities.” After some of our members started mentoring in the AIM High Program, which works with underserved high school students until they graduate from college, our organization grew more involved with the positive message and effect being spread by Center for Companies That Care. This year, we were named to Center for Companies That Care’s Honor Roll for our years of dedication to taking into account the human toll when making business decisions regarding employees, customers, and (as it relates to our community involvement) underserved students.

It indeed takes a village to raise a child, and every child deserves a vested interest in the future. By working with high school students to help them prepare for college, we’re not only investing our resources in bettering the lives of individual community members but also in the community itself. To remain a socially responsible company, Rose Paving will continue to work with Center for Companies That Care as well as other organizations that promote the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.

Tim Chimack
Vice President, Rose Paving



An Open Letter to Our Community
August 1, 2020

As a member of BOMA Suburban Chicago’s Diversity & Inclusion Committee it is important that I express my views on recent events that weigh heavily on my mind and are impactful to our community.

George Floyd. His tragic death has unleashed a wave of civil unrest across the country and ignited protests all over the world. What his death has done is highlighted an alarm bell that has been ringing since slavery ended and much of America has remained tone deaf to. Police violence in this country has been displayed disproportionately against racial minority and poor population’s time and time and time again. However, his high-profile death is just the latest example of this continuing problem and since his death, there have even been a few more. This alarm bell is one that America has been hitting the snooze button on for centuries.

Please understand my intentions. In both our personal and professional lives, I hope to convey that we, as Americans, are well past the point for open, honest and in-depth dialogue about what is going on. Additionally, I want to touch on some of the anger that has been made more visible by the protests.

Finally, I hope that it is understood that this is a call to action.

It has taken many hours to write this letter as a black woman and, for some of you, this may be a hard read. I am angry and I am fully aware that this letter will convey as much. My emotional state has been very chaotic, and it has taken some time to gather myself and get to a point where I could speak on where we are. Amidst the backdrop of an international pandemic, many of those that you work with on a day to day basis, like me, have not been okay. We have also had to emotionally process the tragic deaths of George Floyd and others as well as acknowledge the growing numbers of racist acts and the increased knowledge that we do not feel protected in our own country. Yet, we continue our work because that is what is expected of us and we maintain our professionalism and watch as our coworkers view these events as isolated incidents and not as the systemic, racial and classist issues that they truly are. This is a problem. The comments and conversations that I have been privy to tend to stay centered around rioting because no one really wants to delve into the “why” of the protests. Too often with his death and many others, I have heard both personal and professional associates continually state that this is not the America that they know. That this is not us. As a side note, looting has nothing at all to do with the protests. Opportunists exist everywhere.

Education and honesty are what is needed now. Things are changing. We have reached a point in our history where black and other people of color are becoming quite comfortable with white America not remaining comfortable. For far too long, and especially in the professional arena, racial minorities have toned down our language in order to not make our white brethren too uncomfortable. Unfortunately, understand that

we have been sharing our collective experiences for far too long while the rest of the country practices a form of willful ignorance with our experiences. Generations of time. The issues that we as black Americans face, were faced by our parents and their parents. Unequivocally, this IS America. This IS Us. As much as we are taught to be proud of American independence and exceptionalism, we should also be taught to acknowledge American shortcomings and to deal with them. Black history is literally American history. It is not separate and divisible from the whole.

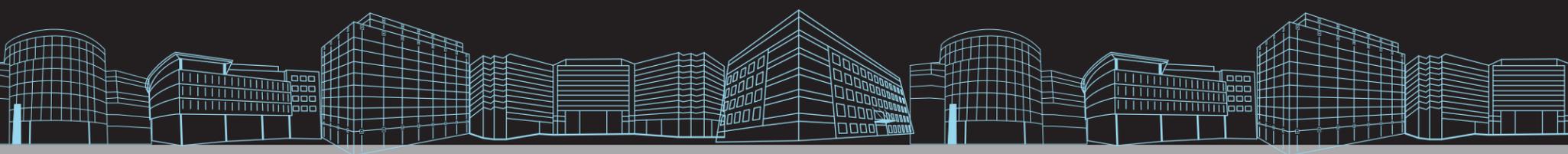
Race and racism are woven into this nation’s very DNA. What is happening in the country today is a culmination of hundreds of years of NOT dealing with those shortcomings.

The events that we are watching unfold now, I have seen countless times in my years in varying degrees. What has changed are the names of the dead and the ferocity of the anguish unleashed, and the media coverage provided; but it is a familiar cycle and eventually there will be silence. Silence as we wait for the cycle and alarm to start up again with the next injustice. If there is a positive in all this, it has become apparent that among the sea of faces of the publicized protests there have been more participants of other races. For me, this is a break from the regular cycle and is necessary. If it were within the sole power of black America to end inequality in this country, it would have happened well before now because we have been fighting for it for so long. But the power to end systemic racism has always existed with white America. Our police are not above reproach. If we are to heal as a nation and move forward, individual citizens cannot continue to be afraid in directly acknowledging and calling out injustice and inequality, regardless in who it is against.

If you have watched recent events unfold and you have wondered what you can do differently, I would recommend that you begin to educate yourself. Actually, listen to learn about the issues that friends and family members of color must deal with in our country. Our experiences have not been the same and just because they are not happening to you, it does not mean that they are not happening. The Diversity & Inclusion committee will provide programming that will go beyond the norm displayed over the last few years in other efforts. I would encourage you to participate. This is a fight for equality, freedom and humanity and all of us must be engaged. Please do not hit snooze on this alarm because this fight feels too hard or dealing with it makes you too uncomfortable.

Amongst all the calls for solidarity and statements of standing with black America, I want you to know ... we have been waiting on you all along.

Kita Harris
Property Manager



The COVID-19 pandemic has tested all of us and these are trying times. While our world is already struggling, acts of violence have been committed, including the tragic murder of George Floyd. What happened to George Floyd was not the result of a bad apple; it was the predictable consequence of a racist and prejudiced system and culture that has treated Black bodies as the enemy from the beginning. It is the fruit borne of toxic seeds planted in 1619, when the first enslaved men and women arrived on this continent. Floyd is the latest in a long list of names that stretches back to that time. Some of those names we know (Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Oscar Grant, Eric Garner, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Emmett Till, and Martin Luther King, Jr.), most we don't.

BOMA Suburban Chicago challenges our members to work diligently within your companies and as a collective to ensure that, BOMA be an Association of growth, awareness, acceptance, accountability and action. **Be an agent of change!!**

BOMA Suburban Chicago challenges the real estate industry, to create a dialogue for progress. To use our positions of power in the real estate community to help advance equity through housing and career opportunities and by holding our leaders accountable through legislation. **Impact change!!**

BOMA Suburban Chicago is an association that is made up of members of all ethnicities, genders, creeds, sexual orientations, and

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.” - Martin Luther King, Jr.

We share the anguish over these injustices, and we stand with the Black Community fighting for a more equitable future. As an organization, we condemn in the strongest possible way and never tolerate, racism or prejudice in any form. We stand in solidarity with courageous protesters around the country. We value the millions of voices that will not be silent against violence and racism.

life experiences. These differences are to be cherished and celebrated, because as an association, we are stronger not as a small group of a few but as a larger community of many. Remain committed to doing your part within our community and our association to live up to one of our nation's most important founding principles, that all men and women are created equal. Let's work together to be healthy, whole, and make the future a better place to be.

Violence against Black people must end, and ingrained systems of oppression must be challenged. We all have a part to play.

Karen R. Boyd
Assistant General Manager

BOMA Suburban Chicago challenges you as an individual, to look inward and consider where your own prejudices lie. We must begin to do the work of shifting our biases. **It begins with you!!**



Letter from our Diversity & Inclusion Chair

The case for diversity in commercial real estate has never been stronger. A growing body of research shows significant correlations between diverse teams and better business outcomes. Yet while diverse representation has been steadily increasing, the pace of change remains too slow relative to the challenges that businesses and society face—a clear indicator that there is still much to be done.

BOMA/Suburban Chicago aspires to be a role model for our membership. By embracing diversity and inclusion, we empower our CRE community and deliver the best service to our clients. We are seeking to engage a diverse workforce in creating a culture where similarities, differences and constructive dialogue are valued. BOMA/Suburban Chicago strives to provide education that teaches respectfulness, and a productive environment for all.

The BOMA/Suburban Chicago D&I Committee plans to:

- Engage our members and embrace diversity, experiences, and perspectives.
- Build self-awareness to overcome our biases.
- To establish an inclusive and respectful workforce.

Please join us to embrace the diversity and inclusion initiative. We value your feedback and participation.

Matt Roberts
Duke Realty

Committee Members

Matt Roberts, CPM
Committee Chair
Duke Realty

Michael Mulcrone
Staff

Dan Flores, LEED AP
Board Liaison
Automatic Mechanical Services

Barb Turbett
Staff

Maggie Amaya, RPA, FMA
JLL

Karen Boyd
Millbrook Properties

Meg Cook
Painters USA, Inc.

Kita Harris, RPA
Colliers International

Carlie Stogis
JLL



If you would like to join the Diversity and Inclusion Committee or if you have questions or comments about the ideas expressed in the newsletter, I encourage you to contact Michael Mulcrone, Executive Director, at MichaelM@BomaSuburbanChicago.com.

BOMA/Suburban Chicago
1515 E. Woodfield Road, Suite 110
Schaumburg IL 60173

 *equality*

 *diversity*

 *respect*

 *justice*

 *tolerance*

