Hello,

The WindowDressers Board Members and Staff add our voices to the chorus condemning racial injustice, violence, and oppression. We recognize that these problems manifest in the acts of individuals but also are codified in long-standing and deep-rooted systemic inequities that have worked their tentacles into every corner of our lives.

I have struggled over the last week and a half with feelings of horror, grief, anger, and despair after I watched as yet another Black person, George Floyd, was murdered at the hands of police. I have felt helpless and frustrated at the unending injustice and tragic loss of life. As a white person living in a very white area of a predominantly white state, I will admit that I did not see, at first, how WindowDressers could play a part in dismantling systemic racism. Of course, we can. We must. It begins by acknowledging that racism exists here, listening to the people of color leading us towards change, and committing to take action.

As researcher Tony Reames points out:

"Nearly a third of U.S. households struggle to afford their energy bills, with one in five cutting back on or forgoing necessities such as food or medicine to pay for electricity and heat, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Some 14 percent have received a disconnection notice, and 10 percent keep temperatures at unsafe levels to reduce costs. ***Of those struggling, about half are black and 40 percent are Latino."***

Energy justice has always been a core part of WindowDressers' mission. We have always provided a percentage of our inserts to low-income residents free of charge. Over the last three years, we have increased that percentage from 23.7% to 35.5%. We have made some strides in outreach to residents of color who need that support. We can do more. We will do more.

The WindowDressers Board of Directors will be meeting later this month to examine every aspect of our program through an antiracist lens. We will determine concrete steps that our staff and board will take to improve the racial diversity of our volunteer organizers, our clients, our board, and our staff. If you have ideas that you would like to share with us, we invite you to email them to: director@windowdressers.org. We are listening.

In Solidarity,
Laura Seaton, Executive Director
The WindowDressers