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Dear First Star Supporters,

The First Star team stands in solidarity with the Black community. We fully support your right to be seen and heard. Of course. We are shocked and saddened by the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, the latest in an endless line of vicious abuse of Black people in America. We condemn police brutality, and we demand the institutional and personal changes required to establish the most fundamental values of human equity and justice.

First Star works to uplift communities and create change by building strong pathways for hundreds of high-school age foster youth to post-secondary education, through our 13 university partnerships across the US. The tragic reality is that the Black community has been suffering at the hands of institutional racism for hundreds of years. Many of the youth we serve enter the foster care system at disproportionately higher rates due to the racism that permeates the bureaucracies that govern all of us. Black youth enter the child welfare system at rates two to three times higher than white children. This greatly impacts the trajectories of black foster youth over time. Unequal conditions continue to blight minority communities in America, and that is why we are raising our voices alongside the Black community to mandate change.

The Black Lives Matter demonstrations include our students, staff and stakeholders, demanding that America now extend its promises of liberty and justice to all of its citizens, including those in the Black community. We are doing our best to help our students through these sad realities and towards better futures, where they can live free from the oppressive grasp of institutional racism, abuse, and neglect.

We ask you, our extended First Star family, to join us in this mission. There is no future in injustice, in despair, in economic inequity, nor in brutality.

In Partnership,

First Star, Inc.

Erin Buchanan, Development and Communications Officer

Lyndsey Collins, Chief Executive Officer

Jennyann Gallo, Expansion and Alumni Program Coordinator

Janice Oyama, Director of Academy Engagement, West Coast

Brian Ritchey, Director of Academy Engagement, East Coast

Peter Samuelson, President and Co-Founder

Robin Winston, Chief Operating Officer