

The SMSDC's Call to Action



We have been here before. Another pivotal moment caught on video for the world to witness, one more killing of an African American man. So many victims both known and unknown amongst many has resulted in fear, anger, frustration, and despair. Fractured by the continued injustices of the past and present, our local communities were linking together in our First Amendment rights to peaceably assemble to protest against racial inequality and the ongoing injustices against all people of color – while amid this devastating pandemic.

Many of our MBEs had family generational businesses, barbershops, clothing establishments, and art galleries destroyed by those who would prefer to use this platform as an opportunity to advance their personal odious agenda. Small businesses are the DNA of our community, with limitless potential which deserves to thrive. They have relentlessly demonstrated we are mighty when we continue to work together. Our nation's economic health depends upon a vibrant and robust entrepreneurial community.

The SMSDC joins in the national and local outrage and the call for immediate change. We walk in our vision to create parity and equitable economic growth in our diverse communities of color. We remain committed to doing whatever it takes to see our minority businesses grow and flourish. We are resolute in our mission to create opportunities and an environment for minority business enterprises to grow and to actively add value for corporate members through positive business relationships. We embrace the affiliates of the NMSDC coming together as thought leaders to craft strategies that will assist us with overcoming the barriers of racial prejudice and inequality enabling our MBEs to continue to escalate forward.

The SMSDC's Call to Action is for each one of us to engage in the most powerful form of protest we can exercise. **VOTE**. Exercise this same momentum we are experiencing now in November and **VOTE**. Change at the local level is essential for change at the national level. **VOTE** for justice and to amplify our voices. **VOTE** for your county, state, local officials, and your school board. **VOTE** because those who came before us were desperately pleading the case for our own humanity by voting and were brutally silenced. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar wrote, "Racism in America is like dust in the air. It seems invisible – even if you're choking on it – until you let the sun in". "As long as we keep shining that light, we have a chance of cleaning it wherever it lands."

Just as a rising tide floats all boats, we all must keep our lights shining. Shining lights require active, resilient participation, not just a one-time opulent spotlight. Even the smallest light, the light of a firefly produces an abundant light when it is accompanied by others determined to light the way for future success, encouraged by the "audacity of hope."



Karen Box
President & CEO

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SMSDC is affiliated with the National Minority Supplier Development Council
Austin (512) 386-8766 | San Antonio (512) 659-2160 | El Paso (915) 433-0612 | Oklahoma City (405) 767-9900