



Dana Coelho <dana@metrodna.org>

Fwd: Reflections on Our Troubled Times: A note from DPR Executive Director Allegra "Happy" Haynes

1 message

Robertson, Gordon D. - DPR Director <Gordon.Robertson@denvergov.org>
To: Dana Coelho <dana@metrodna.org>

Thu, Jun 18, 2020 at 2:12 PM

Thought you would appreciate this message!

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Parks and Rec <parksandrecreation@denvergov.org>
Date: June 18, 2020 at 2:00:05 PM MDT
To: # All Users - Parks and Recreation <#AllUsers-ParksandRecreation@denvergov.org>
Subject: Reflections on Our Troubled Times: A note from DPR Executive Director Allegra "Happy" Haynes

Sent on Behalf of Allegra "Happy" Haynes to Denver Parks & Recreation and the Community We Serve:

"Reflections on Our Troubled Times"**Allegra "Happy" Haynes**

As a child of the 60's and coming from a family of civil rights activists, I am no stranger to the struggle for racial justice, social equity and human rights and once again, my soul is heavy with sadness and outrage by the recent shockingly violent murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police. I have participated in many protests, marches, sit-ins, pickets and boycotts in response to injustices in this city and across the nation, some of them incidents of police brutality very similar to this latest one in Minneapolis. African Americans have experienced the atrocity of racial violence either perpetrated or condoned by those in power from slavery to senseless killings witnessed today in far too many incidents. Unfortunately, this is an experience shared by other communities of color in our nation's history.

When this latest incident occurred, I was totally ill-equipped to express my feelings and explain to my young niece and nephew how after so many decades of struggle, changes and progress that had been made, this could still happen today. As I witnessed the protests around the country and here in Denver and overlooking the misguided and indiscriminate violence of a few people, a thread of hope has started to emerge and slowly encircle the sadness and anger.

So, why is this time different?

Like so many communities across the country that have been protesting to express their outrage and grief about the brutal murder of George Floyd, our Denver community has come together in a spirit of unity and resolve to address the institutionalized racism and discrimination that underlies this national crisis and to heal the wounds that divide us. For the first time, people of all backgrounds are coming together to say, "enough is enough" and that together we must address this problem at its core. It is no longer just one group or another's problem, but our collective responsibility to end racial injustice.

Denver Parks and Recreation has an important role to play to address the impacts of institutionalized racism and inequity through our commitment to social justice, inclusion and equity. As all of you know, these are core principles in the Game Plan and from our leadership team to our HR team, our Partnership

Council, our Equity Diversity and Inclusion team and employees across the agency, DPR is committed to using our resources and talents to help build a resilient, equitable and healthy community for everyone, free from discrimination. We commit to these principles through training, community engagement, maintaining a safe and inclusive work environment, planning and building with equity and providing opportunities for our youth to build their path to a bright future. Let's work together with passion and compassion, patience and urgency, openness and determination and creativity and courage.

Even from the beginning, the founders of our country recognized the ongoing need to strive for "a more perfect union". Now, more than ever, we must be all in for that mission. That is why we stand behind "Black Lives Matter". Together, let's pledge to do our part to dismantle the evils of racism and bigotry and build a just society.

