

# National Collaborative for Health Equity

Working with People, Partners, and Purpose



Nov. 7, 2014

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## **Civil rights groups stand in solidarity and awe of young activists in Ferguson**

Washington, D.C. – *This year has been punctuated by enraging acts that have devalued, debased and destroyed young Black and Brown lives – particularly the fatal police shooting of Michael Brown, an unarmed 18-year-old from Ferguson, Missouri. Leading national health, equity and civil rights groups, joining together as grantees of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, issued the following joint statement in response to the courageous actions of young activists who have reinvigorated the Civil Rights Movement.*

We extend our deepest appreciation and admiration for the young activists on the frontlines of the racial justice movement in Ferguson, Missouri. As organizations that engage in anti-racist community-building across all races and ethnicities, we stand in solidarity with you as you seek justice and as you organize against police brutality, officer misconduct and other matters of injustice. We are affirmed by your courage, emboldened by your resilience, and value your contributions.

We acknowledge your frustration against a ceaseless cycle of criminalization and violence against young people of color. You have stared down a system that continuously devalues and debases Black and Brown lives with impunity. We are encouraged by the power of your peaceful protests and encourage you not to give up, give in or give out.

We also want you to know that we value your lives and your well-being. You are our living example of nonviolent, creative, next generation Movement building when justice is delayed and denied. The days ahead may be dark and difficult but your lives and actions are the light that will usher us into a better, brighter tomorrow. You deserve to live in a world where the police protect and serve *all* men, women and children. You deserve simply to live; to be free to pursue your dreams.

The anguish of Ferguson – from the killing of yet another unarmed young person of color, to the lack of accountability fueled by a sheer disregard for Black lives – is one felt by all who believe in justice and racial equity. That you continue to stand strong, in the face of a criminal justice system where assaulting your rights and safety is far too commonplace, is awe-inspiring.

We appreciate you. We hear you. We need you. We stand with you. We pledge to support your vision for change.

*Advancement Project, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, DEMOS, NAACP, National Collaborative for Health Equity, National Congress of American Indians, National Council of Asian Pacific Americans, National Council of La Raza, National Urban League, PICO, Poverty & Race Research Action Council and Race Forward are part of America Healing, a long-term effort of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, working to improve life outcomes for vulnerable children by promoting racial equity and eliminating barriers to opportunity.*