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**Statement by Dr. Gail C. Christopher, Executive Director, National Collaborative for Health Equity**

**GUILTY VERDICT IN GEORGE FLOYD MURDER TRIAL MARKS MAJOR ADVANCE TOWARDS RACIAL JUSTICE**

WASHINGTON – “When Hennepin County Judge Peter Cahill read the verdict in the Derek Chauvin murder trial, many of us openly wept. Chauvin, a former Minneapolis police officer, was found guilty on all counts for the brutal murder of George Floyd. It was a public execution of a Black man lying helplessly in the street as police colleagues looked on callously and stunned civilian witnesses pleaded for the officer to lift his knee from Floyd’s neck.

“Chauvin is now being held accountable for his actions.

“President Biden and Vice President Harris courageously stepped into this moment of shared relief and collective humanity by calling for racial equity and publicly asserting the significance of this trial’s outcome for our nation’s journey toward racial justice.

“At NCHE, we are among the many who wept and exhaled as we accepted this sign of renewed hope that justice for people of color, especially unarmed Black people killed by police, is possible within our legal system. Centuries of injustice have demonstrated that America’s legal system is built on the failed belief in a racial hierarchy. It can and must be transformed.

“It begins with a shared vision for transformative change and the deep belief that it can happen. A rare, miraculous confluence of factors combined to create this unprecedented outcome; it is so rare that law enforcement is held accountable, especially when the victim is Black. This may be a harbinger of system transformation. Floyd’s death spurred the largest, most sustained diverse mobilization of protests and calls for racial justice in history. We believe this was a determining factor in the outcome. The masses could not be denied.

“NCHE stands in solidarity with Floyd’s family, the Black Lives Matter movement and millions of people of all races and ethnicities around the world. We send heartfelt thanks for protesting, never giving up and demanding justice. For the first time in history, millions of people stood up for a Black man, for George Floyd, and in so doing, stood up for the countless other victims.

“Throughout our nation’s history, people of color have suffered and died from racist cruelty and brutality, while the legal system worked *against them*, rather than for justice for all.

“Transformation of entrenched systemic racism requires galvanized public will. At NCHE, we continue working to build that resolve and commitment to racial and health equity through ongoing partnerships that support truth and racial healing, convenings of community, public and private sector leaders and leveraging relevant research and data to inform effective public policies and private practices that fuel progress and change.

“Today, we join millions in breathing a bit freer now that a guilty verdict has been rendered and the humanity of George Floyd is re-affirmed. Our march for justice goes on.”

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(To schedule an interview with Dr. Christopher, please contact Michael K. Frisby  
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### **About NCHE**

Founded in 2014, NCHE established to promote health equity through action, leadership, inclusion and collaboration. We work to create environments that foster the best possible health outcomes for all populations, regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status or nativity. NCHE also works to improve conditions for health and well-being, including those related to housing, education, income and wealth and the physical and social environment. Further, it is imperative that we address historic and contemporary structural, institutional and interpersonal racism, which fuels inequities in our society.