

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

September 24, 2020

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Perhaps you did not sleep well last night or haven't slept well often recently. That's true for me. Last night was hard - been staring at my computer for hours already.

Yesterday afternoon we learned that Kentucky's legal system would turn a blind eye to the murder of Breonna Taylor. There was weeping; there was stunned silence. And in many corners, there was no surprise, which is more salt in a deep, deep wound.

With a heavy heart I struggled to decide if there was any good to come from writing yet another public statement and considered what harm could be caused by silence.

Yesterday morning we witnessed over 100 former law clerks escort the late Justice Ginsburg so she could lie in repose at the Supreme Court. It was a solemn moment weighed down by the knowledge that many in power were already dancing on her grave in the rush to replace her.

Just the day before and closer to home we felt a different kind of loss - a strong leader and a woman of color moving on - again. During a radio interview Milwaukee's departing Health Commissioner Jeanette Kowalik shared how the combined realities of racism and sexism burdened her 2-year tenure, during which she had to reimagine a department serving a diverse community while managing a pandemic. In her interview she acknowledged the pain, but also made clear that she is only switching tactics from local to national impact; she is not changing her focus.

So, I write simply to **acknowledge our shared and individual pain** - from these events and others - and honor our shared and individual values and **our resolve**. I genuinely believe that every day, in small and big ways, our work will bring the change we seek - a just, welcoming and inclusive community and nation. I am confident there will be more pain, but I am also confident that keen focus and kindness toward each other will get us there.

The road will be bumpy (for sure) and will require that we buckle up. And, hard work is harder when we are all working remotely. At times like these, I sometimes turn inward and last night I stumbled on this quote from the poet, Khalil Gibran, who said, "safeguarding the rights of others is the most notable and beautiful end of a human being."

All of us at YWCA Southeast Wisconsin are grateful for the time, talent and treasure you have committed to our justice work. We are humbled to have notable and beautiful human beings join us. **Please stay in touch.**

Onward in solidarity,



Ginny Finn
President & CEO