



As a company that works outside our four walls and strives to do good work in the community, Wheel & Sprocket cannot ignore the injustice that has ensnared entire groups of people in a system that has failed so many--**we know that Black lives matter**. George Floyd's death is just the most recent in a history of violence against Black people that must be the final straw for individuals, organizations, policymakers, and leaders to truly internalize the role we all play as part of the problem, but also as part of the solution. This isn't a political issue, this is a human issue.

The humble bicycle has been rooted alongside social progress for a long time. The womens' suffrage movement in the 1920's, the civil rights, anti-war, and womens' movements in the 1960s and 1970s, the environmental movement of the past decades--there have always been people on bikes, aligned against the injustices and inequities along the way. But many of the promises of social progress remain unfulfilled. And we see those frustrations borne out in the protests today.

Wheel & Sprocket was built on two fundamental ideas: 1) bikes are freedom machines, 2) bikes are for everyone. Riding a bike for the first time is a milestone moment. The wind in our face, the thrill of speed, the joy of cruising down the road under our own power, the world of adventure it opens up--riding connects us to the people and places around us. On a bike, we can feel the fresh clean air filling our lungs and rejuvenating our bodies; on a bike, we can know the contours of our neighborhood in a brand new way; on a bike, we can wave to the kid waiting at the bus stop with her grandma, and they wave back. These connections, small as they may be, are meaningful. These kinds of connections change the relationship we have with these people and places. This is the kind of goodness that has improved lives and guided our work for decades.

But as we reflect on "bikes for everyone," it strikes us that while our doors have always been open to anyone, our customers, staff, and the greater bike industry do not reflect the diversity of our communities. And for many, there are not safe, accessible places to ride bikes. We have to do more than to passively have our doors open to whoever might come in. Instead, we can be taking a more active role in inviting more People of Color in. We must be intentional to have a workplace and a retail experience that is more comfortable, inclusive, and accessible to people that are not White and male. We have to do more to advocate for safe transportation and recreation access in communities that have long seen disinvestment so that everyone has a safe and enjoyable place to ride a bike.

Now is not the time for hollow statements or empty promises. It is the time to listen to this movement's leaders and to do the hard work of building an anti-racist world. Responsibility to advocate is part of the work we do; this statement of intent and direction is only the first step--plans and action will follow. We cannot fulfill our mission to share our knowledge and passion for bikes so that everyone can enjoy their ride unless we also stand against racism. Wheel & Sprocket is going to work.

--The Wheel & Sprocket Family