To our Musicians, Patrons, Sponsors, and Staff:

We want to reiterate our long-standing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our society and our orchestra. The events of the past two weeks remind us of the racial divisions that continue to exist in our nation. We believe that these divisions require structural change, and we intend to play a significant role in supporting such change through our musical performances and engagement with communities.

When The Chicago Philharmonic Society reorganized as an egalitarian, musician-governed society in 2012, we developed a statement of values that we continue to live by today. As a public organization:

- We believe in open, authentic, and trusting relationships between all persons.
- We respect the dignity of each human being and the sincerity of their views.
- We believe in a shared organizational participation by all, and we value inclusiveness over exclusiveness.
- We wish to pursue excellence in everything we do.
- We believe in diversity and pluralism, in policy and practice.
- As a charitable organization, we will handle our affairs as fiduciaries, and everything we do will be in the public interest.

We also recognize the important declaration from the League of American Orchestras, and we support the League’s statement of racial injustice:

“In the face of ceaseless intolerance, hatred, and violence against African Americans in our country, historically and currently, we are impelled to reaffirm that we value all Black lives. Our colleagues of color—and many communities served by the orchestras we represent—are living with deep pain and fear, subjected to the threat of police violence, to the risks inherent in serving as essential workers in a time of crisis, and to ongoing oppression in a society scarred by racism. There is an urgent need for White people and predominantly White organizations to do the work of uprooting this racism.” - Jesse Rosen, President and CEO, League of American Orchestras.

Finally, we are inspired by Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot’s recent statement:

“If there is to be an uprising, let it be for peace. I call on all people of goodwill, young, old, black, brown, white, Asian, from all faith traditions, to rise up with me for peace.”

We hope you will all join us in standing for peace, for diversity, for equity, and for inclusion. Through our music and our performance – and by working together – we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Manning, Board Chairman
Donna Milanovich, Executive Director
JeNyce Boolton, Diversity and Inclusion Committee