

A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MINORITY AND WOMEN INCLUSION



a choice: the pain of change or the pain of staying the same.

This plan is our call to action. It sets forth how the FDIC will work to transform our workforce and how our efforts will ultimately help make the banking system safer, fairer, and more inclusive. As Chairman McWilliams noted in her message, this plan is unlike any other we have had before. It tackles the very core of who we are as an agency. It takes a deep dive into root causes of our culture, ethics, and history, as a society and as a venerable agency. It is brutally honest in the assessment of our successes and past failures on issues that matter on an intrinsic level to us, as a people, and as colleagues.

Eight minutes, 46 seconds. I have never been able to watch the entire video of George Floyd being killed in police custody. It is too painful. Every time I hear Breonna Taylor’s name I think of the many nights I have watched my daughters sleep peacefully in their beds, trusting that they are safe. I reflect on the many days I jogged in my home state of Georgia and was blessed to return home safely, unlike Ahmaud Arbery.

And when you take a holistic, introspective look and are willing—and ready—to make real change, you end up with the plan before you. The steps outlined embrace the growing pains of addressing longstanding challenges by embedding DEI into every aspect of our operations. We will support our workforce and our communities to reach their full potential. We will promote inclusive prosperity by including minority- and women-owned businesses, law firms, and investors in our business activities. We will partner with our supervised institutions to identify and promote DEI policies and practices to make their communities more inclusive.

These horrendous events may feel personal to me as a Black woman, but I am painfully aware that many individuals and communities feel disenfranchised, regardless of their skin color. What I never anticipated is that I would be writing about such important matters to introduce a *Strategic Plan* at the FDIC. While those events have forced a long-overdue national conversation about race in America, our view of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) must be broad and it must be bold. That realization formed the very foundation of this *Strategic Plan*.

During my 22-year tenure with the FDIC, I have never been more proud to work for this agency than I am today. This plan will drive meaningful progress. We will hold ourselves accountable for the execution and the results. Most importantly, we will no longer accept the status quo.

We examined our data and listened to our colleagues to gain a better understanding of what needs to be done. We had honest conversations about the significant commitment needed to be successful. We listened. And then we listened some more. The more we listened, the clearer it became that the FDIC faces

Join us on the journey.

Nikita Pearson