

UMTIA Statement Regarding the Murder of George Floyd and Recent Events



UMTIA
Upper Midwest Translators & Interpreters Association

June 16, 2020

The members of UMTIA's Board would like to acknowledge the emotional intensity and the pain many translators and interpreters are experiencing as we face the harshest realities of racism in America in our own backyard and the justified reactions at the local, national, and global level. Our heartbreak, our rage and our disbelief have been reflected in the actions of millions of people who have taken to the streets around the world to protest hundreds of years of injustice.

We live in a state that has some of the worst racial disparities in this country and we are aware that being at the epicenter of these protests has been at once challenging and empowering. Many translators and interpreters, among them UMTIA members, have been at the forefront of the action. Some have been tirelessly volunteering as interpreters in non-English-speaking communities and helping other volunteers distribute food, water, and cleaning supplies to those that have been affected by the looting and destruction. Translators have been translating public service announcements on very short notice, so that members of limited-English-proficiency communities would be safe in their homes. The relevance of our professions has become even more evident during this challenging time for our community.

As translators and interpreters, many of us are members of minority groups and people of color ourselves; and though we might feel particularly vulnerable and affected by the weight of these events, we also have a vantage point from which to judge the current crisis. We are privileged to see, on a daily basis, how communities are enriched by diversity – how people who look different from the local majority, who speak different languages, cook different foods and wear different clothes, can enrich this nation – and any nation – in a myriad of ways. Translators and interpreters, moreover, know better than most what diversity *means*, because they know how to put themselves in the shoes of others. They know what it means to look at the world from a different perspective.

For more information, or to support translators and interpreters as they continue to work on behalf of marginalized populations, please feel free to reach out to us at president@umtia.org or info@umtia.org.

UMTIA's Executive Board