

Declaration Promoting Racial & Social Justice

our cooperative library system's statement acknowledging the need to grow diversity, equity & inclusion through librarianship



We, as library leaders, recognize that systemic racism and discrimination exist in our communities. We reject oppression in all forms, and we acknowledge the important role that libraries have as advocates and spaces of solace.

The Southern Tier Library System, in partnership with our region's member libraries, has upheld the Library Bill of Rights and Core Values of Librarianship since the inception of our library system in 1958. Both documents serve as the foundation of our practice and its implementation.

Our library system recognizes that members of our communities have endured discriminatory treatment because of their race, ethnicity, age, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, or socioeconomic status.

Moreover, ongoing and historic tragedies involving race and discrimination demonstrate that libraries share a social and civic responsibility to unite our communities around a purpose of ending widespread violence and racism towards Black people, Indigenous people, and People of Color.

We know that libraries are integral to the well-being of our communities, and we share the responsibility to speak up in the face of injustice. Libraries must be actively antiracist in all communities, so we can continually evolve and strive toward a future that is safe and equitable for all.

To that end, we pledge our energy and creativity in our continued efforts to build genuine racial and social justice throughout our communities.

Adopted By the STLS Board of Trustees on March 16, 2021