

December 12, 2017

Re: Public Apology to the Community

On behalf of the staff and Board of Management of The 519, we apologize to the community and specifically to the trans community, for the mishandling of information that our staff received from a member of the public, about a trans woman deceased in August 2017, who we have subsequently learned was Alloura Wells.

The staff, leadership team, and Board of The 519 are deeply saddened by this situation as it does not reflect the profound commitment we bring to our work every day in improving the lives of LGBTQ2S communities in Toronto and beyond.

We recognize the pain this has caused members of the community and our staff. We recognize that the trans community and in particular, trans feminine women of colour and sex workers, face the most significant systemic discrimination, barriers to service, and violence. We know that we must continue to improve the way we provide programs and services for those in our communities. We also know that we must continue to advocate for systemic change to address issues of discrimination, poverty, barriers to service and violence across all institutions.

In accordance with our commitment, the Board is convening a special Joint Executive and Senior Leadership Taskforce to undertake a comprehensive needs assessment to gather input from the trans communities including those who use our programs, those who are not using our programs, and our staff team, about the issues, realities and impact facing trans communities.

Based on community and staff feedback, as well as a best practice review, the needs assessment will also identify ways in which The 519 can develop new and or refine existing programs, services and resource allocations to better meet the needs of the trans communities, especially the most marginalized. This needs assessment will also examine opportunities to embed systemic mechanisms to track and measure progress on our commitments to improve program and service delivery.

The Taskforce reporting to the Board through The 519's Strategic Program Planning Committee, will convene immediately to establish a consultation plan, methodology, and collection of feedback strategy. It will ultimately develop a final report including recommendations that can be implemented on the short, medium and long term to achieve our objectives of responsive, accountable, and sustainable program delivery.

Sincerely,



David Morris



Maura Lawless

cc: The 519 Board of Management