

A Commitment to Racial Justice from the ATSA Board of Directors

June 22, 2020



All of us on the Executive Board of Directors and in the Office of the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers share the world's outrage and grief over the killings of Sandra Bland, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, and so many others whose lives were taken due to the effects of systemic racism and our society's reluctance to address it.

We understand that Black, Brown, and Indigenous people are disproportionately represented within the criminal justice system and are more likely to be marginalized and labeled as high-risk to offend or reoffend. Because ATSA's members work with individuals that society constantly marginalizes, we also see on a daily basis how marginalization negatively affects individuals' well-being, hope, resilience, and ability to safely reintegrate into society.

Within ATSA, we recognize that our members and Executive Board of Directors do not reflect the racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity of those we serve. And we know that it is essential that we nourish a broad and inclusive culture that encourages a diversity of perspectives and range of voices within our association.

We know we can do better, and we will do better.

We commit to doing more to diversify our membership and to acknowledge that many of our Black, Brown, and Indigenous colleagues may feel isolated doing this work. In addition, we commit to reaching out to individuals within underrepresented communities to include them in ATSA's membership as well as on the Board of Directors, in standing committees, and as members of other leadership groups.

To mentor, encourage, and welcome diversity within ATSA's membership, leadership, and partnerships, we will continue to host listening sessions regarding race, power, and privilege; reach out to better understand how issues of race, power, and privilege affect our members and clients; foster a commitment from our members to be more reflective of the communities our clients come from; and formalize processes for incorporating awareness of race and privilege into all facets of our association's work.

ATSA members represent treatment providers and researchers, parole, probation, and corrections officers, district attorneys, public defenders, and law enforcement officials, victim advocacy groups, and others. Given our collective expertise, we have the ability and responsibility to help build a more equitable criminal justice system that will benefit everyone. We will stand with our members to work together to guide changes to policy and practice and to increase the diversity of the many professionals in our fields.

It will take all of us together to recognize, understand, and acknowledge our society's systemic racism and to address the harm it causes to the individuals subjected to it. We commit to working with our membership and other organizations to address these barriers to racial justice. The time for discussion has passed. This is a time for action. We invite you to join us in creating an inclusive and safe world for everyone.

The ATSA Board of Directors

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