



Kinfolk Collective



Kinfolk Collective in coalition with the Black and Brown Workers Collective has formed the *Black Arts and Artisans Labor Coalition* and stand in complete solidarity with current/previous Rebuild Foundation employees. The Rebuild Foundation has created a culture and practice of violence including but not limited to the following declarations:

- a. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** programmatic and staffing decisions have created a toxic and hostile work environment disproportionately affecting Black workers.
- b. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that there is an increased or imbalanced supervision or monitoring of vulnerable staff especially Black staff via the hiring of a white managerial class to oversee black laborers.
- c. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that there exists an inequity or imbalanced pay for front-line staff that do the most laborious work and are often burned out within months due to of lack of support and sustainable infrastructure to assist staff.
- d. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that there exists a culture and practice of a racialized hierarchy that disproportionately isolates and makes front-line Black staff unable to attain more equitable positions within the organization.
- e. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that there is an intentional limiting of Black staff's agency and decision making power with regards to their job titles and duties.
- f. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that Black staff's job descriptions are rewritten without the intent to develop staff's skill-set or support via training or professional development.
- g. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that there exists targeted policing and accountability for whistle-blowers, staff with critical feedback and

Black Arts and Artisans Labor Coalition

staff that report racial bias which include other forms of violence in the workplace.

- h. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that the power structure within the rebuild foundation targets Black staff under the assumption of criminality that informs how Black staff are targeted. This comes in the form of accusations and “evidence” without thoroughly investigating incidents.
- i. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that there is an uplifted retaliation methodology used as the default mode of response to demands of accountability.
- j. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that this hostile working environment reinforces a culture of selective accountability targeting Black staff for disciplinary actions, firings and intimidation while upholding, supporting and allowing senior staff to remain predatory and violent towards staff.
- k. WE DECLARE AND AGREE** that the lack of a Human Resources department apart from management has exacerbated this toxic and exploitive work climate.

WE DEMAND

- a. A Black community engagement liaison be hired from within the Greater Grand Crossing community.
- b. Rebuild establishes a community advisory committee to develop, implement and oversee accountability standards for Rebuild projects within the communities it engages.
- c. Rebuild hosts reoccurring inclusive community forums centering anti-gentrification strategies and ‘ethical redevelopment.’
- d. Rebuild establishes a Human Resources department that does not include a member of management.
- e. An all staff meeting with aforementioned HR dept. to discuss the discriminatory labor/hiring practices mentioned above.

The Rebuild Foundation’s lack of response to demands of accountability indicates a lack of honest commitment to its expressed core values: “black people matter, black spaces matter and black things matter.” As such we demand the following resignations:

1. Theaster Gates, Executive Director
2. Amy Schachman Director of Programs & Development

The Rebuild Foundation has until April 15th, 2017 to respond to the declarations and implement the demands set forth by the broader community. We look forward to further correspondence.

###