

# Mission Statement

## Social Justice Reader Fellowship at the Institute Library, New Haven

On May 25, Minneapolis police officers arrested George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, after a convenience store employee called 911 and told the police that Mr. Floyd had bought cigarettes with a counterfeit \$20 bill. Seventeen minutes after the first squad car arrived at the scene, Mr. Floyd was unconscious and pinned beneath three police officers, showing no signs of life. Mr. Floyd's murder triggered worldwide protests against police brutality, police racism, and lack of police accountability and sparked a national movement for racial and social justice in America.

Inspired by a nationwide call to action and with the guidance of community advisors, the Institute Library has created the Social Justice Reader, a fellowship opportunity for New Haven high school students of African American or African descent to explore race as a social construct, racial justice, and racism from the disciplinary perspective of their choice.

Working with a mentor, students will establish an area of concentration, and identify a guiding question or creative endeavor; this will become the foundation of a project that will be presented publicly at the end of their fellowship.

The outward facing goal of this program is to nurture a commitment to racial justice in the greater New Haven area and beyond. The inward facing goal is to provide support to young adults that will help them grow as individuals and prepare them to become leaders in their communities and in their professions. Students will be paid a stipend for their course of study.

The ideal student for this program will be intellectually curious, courageous in their desire to learn and have the willingness to commit to a rigorous eight-month program of study. We are specifically interested in students that lack access to traditional opportunities.