Black Voices Matter Pledge
Greater South Jersey Chorus

In Professional and Community Contexts, we pledge to:
- Build reciprocal relationships with Black, Brown, and Indigenous (BBI) communities that resist notions of white saviorism.
- Research local issues of segregation, inequity, and income inequality that adversely impact BBI communities, and investigate methods of concrete support, solidarity, and investment that can be offered to those communities.

As a Choral Non-Profit Organization, Board, and Administrators, we pledge to:
- Devote financial resources annually toward Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training for administrative and artistic staff and board, develop and renew an annual DEI plan.
- Take an organizational self-assessment to evaluate the organization's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Develop policies and procedures to implement and promote diversity and inclusion in hiring and in the workplace.
- Elect, hire, empower, and follow Black administrative, creative, and educational choral leaders.
- Assess current board diversity and reaffirm commitment to it.

As Conductors, we pledge to:
- Embrace idiomatic Black choral music and find ways to incorporate respectful and thoughtful arrangements in our choral program; contextualize this music with singers and audience.
- Program non-idiomatic Black choral music, including music of pre-20th century composers (see https://www.mlagmusic.com)
- Strive for representation across each program and concert season without tokenizing.
- Remove arrangements of racist source songs (e.g. minstrel songs) from our choral library.
- Seek expertise from BBI artists and culture bearers; compensate and credit them for their labor.
- Hire BBI choral artists, guest conductors, composers, clinicians, adjudicators, and collaborators for a wide range of work beyond essentialized notions of race/ethnicity (e.g. hire a Black singer to perform Bach, not just spirituals).
- Question choral norms, acknowledging that whiteness is a normalizing agent.