

# MESSAGE TO BIG "I" NATIONAL STAFF FROM PRESIDENT & CEO BOB RUSBULT

## To: Big I Staff

Martin Luther King said, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Dr. King was and still is absolutely correct.

The events unfolding in the world and our country over the last several months have gone from unsettling to appalling. I know we are all incredibly concerned about what is happening in our nation right now. The outrageous injustice in Minneapolis touched a nerve in America, of course with African Americans, but also with our country at large.

Every American should speak out against injustices and be willing to engage in open and honest dialogue about injustice, no matter where it is and who it involves. The pledge of allegiance ends with the phrase "with liberty and justice for all." Those aren't just words, those are core values in the United States, and as American citizens, we have a responsibility to live by them. Dr. King changed America. He said, "We adopt the means of nonviolence because our end is a community at peace with itself. We will try to persuade with our words, but if our words fail, we will try to persuade with our acts."

I am so proud of the work Whitnee has been doing to bring diversity and inclusion to our industry and the IA system. She has raised awareness and made great progress in her endeavors. Now, more than at any time since the 1960s, we need to truly embrace diversity and inclusion.

I want each of you to know you are not alone at the Big I. We are with you in spirit, in common values, in shared goals, in respect, and in understanding. We have been using the saying to our members "We have your back." I want each of you to know that I, and the Big I, have **YOUR** back.

If you have any special needs at this time—counseling, safety from rioting in your area, or other concerns, please let Susannah know. Watch for more from Susannah with details on resources we are offering and opportunities to participate in courageous conversations with other staff. In addition, if you would like to talk to me or any other senior staffer, we are here for you. We will do everything possible to help you through this stressful time.

I will end with another quote from Martin Luther King: "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." So true. The Big I stands for "liberty and justice for ALL."

**Bob**



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