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VIKINGS ANNOUNCE 2020 SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES

Social justice committee to distribute nearly \$1 million of total \$5 million commitment from team/ownership

Eagan, Minn. (September 8, 2020) – Following the Vikings and the Wilf family’s June commitment of \$5 million toward various social justice causes throughout the United States, the team’s social justice committee held a series of meetings to determine how to actively engage through player involvement and financial donations during the 2020 season. Today the team announced nearly \$1 million to go toward the expansion or launch of multiple initiatives in one of three areas of focus: 1) voter education and registration; 2) educational curriculum on racism and Black history; and 3) law enforcement and criminal justice reform.

Voter Education and Registration Awareness

Working together with the Office of the Secretary of State, the Vikings are using the team’s platform to encourage fans to register and safely participate in the electoral process. The Vikings will launch a series of player-led voting content and make it easy for fans to find voting information via [Vikings.com/bethechange](https://vikings.com/bethechange). The team will also help provide personal protective equipment (PPE) for polling workers throughout Minnesota. Additionally, the team has hosted voter educational sessions with the entire Vikings staff and players/coaches in conjunction with Rock the Vote and Secretary of State Steve Simon with the goal of having 100% of the organization registered to vote in the November election.

All Square

The Vikings will further expand the team’s commitment to [All Square](#), a local nonprofit social enterprise that invests in the minds and lives of formerly incarcerated individuals. Centered on a craft grilled cheese restaurant, professional development institute, and forthcoming civil rights law firm, All Square’s mission is to ensure that those impacted by the criminal justice system have the support and opportunities they deserve to become our country’s future leaders, business owners, legal practitioners and entrepreneurs. The Vikings engagement will focus on All Square’s Fellow & Fellow Alum Fund.

George Floyd Memorial Scholarship Inaugural Recipient

In June, the Vikings created the George Floyd Legacy Scholarship with a \$125,000 endowment that will generate approximately \$5,000 annually to benefit African American graduating seniors in Minneapolis-St. Paul who are pursuing post-secondary education. The inaugural recipient, **Mimi Kol-Balfour**, was selected following her essay submission and was informed last week via videoconference by Vikings Owner/President **Mark Wilf**, General Manager **Rick Spielman**, running backs **Alexander Mattison** and **Ameer Abdullah**, and linebackers **Anthony Barr** and **Eric Kendricks**. Kol-Balfour is a graduate of Southwest High School who will be attending Barnard College this fall.

Critical Conversations

In partnership with [RISE \(Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality\)](#), the Vikings will host a series of Critical Conversation sessions with Minnesota High School athletic programs to help address issues of race and injustice. Vikings safety **Anthony Harris** and linebacker **Anthony Barr** spoke

in August to a group of high school coaches to discuss the importance of having these conversations in a team environment. The program with RISE will further formalize the discussions and provide statewide access for Minnesota athletic programs to engage on these important issues.

306: Black History Curriculum Expansion

In 2016, with a focus on integrating Black history into mainstream U.S. history and developing courses devoted to the African American experience, the Vikings became the first NFL team to partner with **Everfi** in an effort to bring a [306 Black History](#) curriculum to Minnesota students. The interactive course informs and inspires today's students through history's most important stories of Black women and men who overcame obstacles through grit, strength, creativity and intellect. The digital curriculum incorporates videos from Vikings Legends, provides direct source materials and allows students to explore and reflect on key themes of Black history. Now in its fifth year, the program has since been replicated by the NFL in many markets. In 2020, the Vikings will expand the curriculum from 12 to 24 schools and reach thousands of students. For more details on the 306 Black History course, click [here](#).

Project Success

In 2019, the Vikings partnered with [Project Success](#), a Minneapolis-based organization focused on helping kids develop life-skills, support and confidence so they are more successful and engaged during high school and more prepared for life after graduation. The two organizations took 50 students of color from Minneapolis, along with Vikings running backs **CJ Ham** and **Ameer Abdullah** and safety **Anthony Harris**, to Washington, DC, for a special experience that included a visit to the National Museum of African American History & Culture. The trip was to be replicated in 2020, but due to COVID-19, this year's plan will be a day-long virtual experience and the Vikings and Project Success plan to return to DC in 2021.

In addition to the initiatives listed above, the Vikings are also increasing the team's investment in and involvement with the following groups:

- Hennepin County & Ramsey County Juvenile Detention Centers
- Jeremiah Program
- The Link
- Page Education Foundation
- People Serving People

"We are proud of the foundation Vikings players have established over the last several years, actively engaging our community, but we are all aware of the imperative work that needs to continue," said Vikings Owner/President **Mark Wilf**. "We are unified in working to create meaningful and substantial change and believe these initiatives will help move us forward."

For social justice photo and video assets, click [here](#). For follow-up interviews with any of the following individuals, please contact Vikings Communications Coordinator **Carly Bonk** at bonkc@vikings.nfl.net:

- 306 Black History Curriculum
 - **Jesse Bridges**, Everfi SVP of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- All Square
 - **Emily Hunt Turner**, Founder & CEO
- Critical Conversations
 - **Charles Adams**, Head Coach Minneapolis North High School
- George Floyd Memorial Scholarship
 - **Mimi Kol-Balfour**, Inaugural Recipient
- Project Success
 - **Adrienne Dierks**, Founder & Executive Director

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