



## **YSA Statement on Black Lives Matter**

The students, staff, and families of Young Scientist Academy stand in support of Black people during these difficult times. Racial equality and social justice are currently on trial each day on our streets in the form of protests and outrage. We condemn any instance of police brutality as an assault on human rights.

As a youth enrichment organization, Young Scientist Academy is committed to eliminating inequality and racism that exist in science. Our mission is “empowering youth of all backgrounds to be community ambassadors of science and technology,” including prioritizing participation by youth of color in our hands-on science programs. Science inspires dreams and discoveries: it is the backbone for gaining insight and advancing knowledge in everything we do and experience in life. Yet, Black scholars and their voices continue to be poorly represented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. This leads to less awareness on issues affecting Black communities, and less power to solve the world’s problems with diverse perspectives and ideas.

YSA seeks to listen, learn, and understand, by engaging with our students, their families, local leaders including law enforcement, and other non-profit organizations working to support the Black community in the Cape Fear region. YSA has and will continue to research environmental and social justice issues, and share those results through conversations with the public and elected leaders. Our youth gain skills and confidence to critically think and collaborate to address future complex topics in our country. While we learn together, our relationships with individual students and their families and support for their safety and well-being is our highest priority.

Eradication of racism is urgently necessary, and there are various ways to help and stay engaged. In our personal lives, we are sitting down and having important conversations with our children on racism and how to combat it throughout our region. We are using our resources to vote, donate, support, volunteer, and share opportunities for change.

Science is a rewarding and prosperous career path that benefits society, and it should be equally accessible to Black youth as it is to other races. YSA will continue to put our energy into the youth of our community and lift them up with support and love. This is our promise and commitment.