

Sambatek Team,

As things are settling down following the events of the past week, I'd like to share my thoughts regarding the situation and how Sambatek can help the community.

After a quite memorial day weekend, I was awake late at night and saw the unedited video on my Twitter feed. Like many of you, I was struck by the death of George Floyd and the lack of value for human life and human dignity. It took me from Tuesday until the weekend to regain my composure. I can only imagine how our coworkers, friends, and neighbors who live in Minneapolis felt.

As with incidents in the past, I would have been saddened by the racial injustice and then gone about minding my own business. But this time at our dinner table, our two high school daughters asked us the question what are we doing about it? They wanted to attend the peaceful sit-in protest scheduled at the State Capital. On Tuesday, I went to the Capitol with my daughters and saw a sea of young students peacefully protesting calling for racial justice, equity, and inclusion. It is this passion and commitment to work towards a meaningful change by the next generation of sons and daughters that inspires me to openly voice my aspirations for a better society and do my part more deliberately within my sphere of influence at Sambatek, American Council of Engineering Companies, and the communities we live in.

At our MnDOT-ACEC/MN Leadership meeting yesterday, it was inspiring to hear the Commissioner of MnDOT Margaret Anderson-Kelliher speak so eloquently about the need for racial justice and equity. Of the 100 or so people that attended the zoom meeting there was not a single Black American. Gone are the days we keep telling ourselves "well we cannot find minorities to recruit into the engineering workforce". We must sincerely do our part to embrace change and mitigate conscious or unconscious biases. Firms must reach out to inner city high schools and colleges to deliberately recruit young women and men into STEM programs. We must first acknowledge the problem and then make deliberate steps towards progress. Professionals in the engineering space are problem solvers. If we can put a man on the moon, there is nothing we as a nation cannot accomplish – if we truly wanted to!

For over ten years, Sambatek has been working with Minneapolis Risen Christ Catholic Missionary School, to mentor 8th grade students to pursue STEM programs as part of "Imagine the Possibilities" program. We also helped initiate U.S. Bank Stadium Design Consortium to put together a team of minority and women owned businesses to pursue and successfully complete the Civil Engineering design for the US Bank Stadium. Sambatek took the lead role in creating the United Transportation Coalition – to help a group of minority owned and women owned firms to collectively win MnDOT GEC Contracts.

Now working with Keith Baker – President of National Association of Minority Contractors (MN), we are actively working towards a coalition of design firms to work with the WeLoveLakeStreet.com organization to help rebuild our beloved City. The goal here is to put

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together a group of civil, structural, electrical, mechanical, architectural, and other design firms to band together and offer free services to help rebuild the community. There is a lot of work to be done and it will likely take months, if not, years to rebuild the businesses that were damaged or destroyed. Since designing and redeveloping public and private infrastructure is our expertise, we can assist private land owners and governmental agencies in the reconstruction efforts. The details are forthcoming, but we believe we can donate time and money toward this effort and do our part in rebuilding the community. In the near future, we'll provide updates on this collaborative effort and offer opportunities to donate.

Clearly, all of us together can do more. We have always counted on our employees to come up with creative ideas and be there for Sambatek during times of need whether it is to help overcome the great recession or COVID-19. I am calling on all our employees and their families to deepen our community engagement, contribute time, talent, and ideas to help rebuild a more inclusive community. Let's initiate this open dialog and action steps thru your ideation survey followed by Zoom Townhall Meeting next Thursday.

Let us not stop at feeling sad about George's death and get back to business as usual. As Martin Luther King Jr said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere". Let us commit ourselves to embrace change and take action to end systemic racism and foster inclusion and diversity as we realize our vision to build a thriving enterprise that truly enhances the lives of our employees, clients, and the communities.

Stay safe and healthy!



Sirish K. Samba, PE  
President & CEO