

An invitation to bring healing and community change in response to tragedy

Making the Dream a Reality



Spring is the season of new beginnings. March 20th marks the first day of spring! A week after Daylight Saving Time, the days are longer and warmer. After a long winter, we are feeling hopeful for the rebirth that's symbolized by spring!

For the Philando Castile Peace Garden, this rebirth is quite literal. Plants will start to grow again after the snow melts, we will plant flowers and other annuals, and visitors will return to stroll through the Peace Garden! Planting greenery and florals is part of our beautification process. Donors, thank you for your continued support of the Philando Castile Peace Garden. Your frequent donations allow us to maintain and beautify the garden. Please continue to

spread the word to friends and family about the Peace Garden and to ask them to donate. Every donation counts, no matter its size. Thank you!

As the weather continues to warm, we hope to host community events throughout the spring and summer to raise funds for the Peace Garden. We are just $200,000 short of completing this campaign! The finish line is in sight. Stay subscribed to this newsletter and follow our Instagram page @PhilandoCastilePeaceGarden to receive updates about upcoming events.



What do traumatized communities do to heal?

"Community trauma" is something groups that are long subjected to interpersonal violence, structural violence, and historical harms experience. Research shows that roots of community trauma grow from historical and ongoing causes of social inequities. Some of these include poverty, racism, sexism, oppression, *power dynamics* and the erasure of culture and communities. A clear example of power dynamics in contemporary society is the unequal power dynamic between law enforcement and African Americans (and other people of color).

In Minnesota alone, there have been 215 deaths after a physical confrontation with law enforcement since 2000. Fifty-one of those killed were Black. Black people in America are more likely to be killed by police than any other demographic and are killed at higher rates. Police violence directly affects the mental health and well-being of the Black community as a whole, not just individuals who experience it firsthand. Constant stress of the threat of police violence, the actual experience of police violence, and the aftermath of police brutality at a personal and societal level cause extreme wear and tear on one's mental health. Police violence also breeds mistrust in the institutions meant to keep people safe.

There are many ways in which communities traumatized by police violence cope and heal. One way is through attending rallies and protests. Protests can be cathartic. A large frustration for communities of color is that they feel unheard. Historically, their problems have been minimized and dismissed. When police officers are not held accountable for their actions, protesting allows people to express their outrage. They also make their message known to wider groups of people.

Staying in touch with a community of like-minded people is also important. Talking with friends or family who are empathetic prevents internalization—the blaming of negative thoughts and emotions on oneself. Engaging in conversations with others helps in understanding and processing those feelings.

There are countless other modes of healing, but a large one is creative or personal expression and placemaking. Using art to promote healing of community wounds can be a powerful way of change. Creating art is a way to cope with stress, and community-engaged art shines light on physical and emotional experiences. Designing spaces for art and engagement creates opportunities for residents to reframe the narrative about their community and emphasize importance for dedicated spaces for healing. The Philando Castile Peace Garden is an example of creative expression and placemaking.
Its presence in the Falcon Heights community demonstrates a commitment to healing, justice and reflection.



If you have plans to go to the Philando Castile Peace Garden and would like to share photos of your visit, don't forget to tag us in your Instagram stories or posts using the tag @PhilandoCastilePeaceGarden! We are eager to see what peace and reflection in the Peace Garden looks like to you.



Soon all of the snow will be melted and temperatures will be perfect for visitors!

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