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First Lady Frances Wolf Joins the Office of Advocacy and Reform to Honor Day of Racial Healing

Speakers Build on Themes of Art and Solidarity to Heal Wounds

First Lady Frances Wolf visited Jenkintown, Montgomery County today, the Day of Racial Healing, and called on Pennsylvanians to use this day as an opportunity to pause, reflect, and rededicate ourselves to creating a more just commonwealth. At the center of today's event was a mural and a documentary of the same name, "Symbol of Solidarity" and the story of how art can help inspire communities and heal divides.

"We've seen this time and time again throughout history. Racial trauma runs deep in our commonwealth and our country," said First Lady Wolf of the power of art and its ability to heal. "We must fully face it and give it space to be expressed in order to heal our communities. We must ask ourselves, how can I help? How can I make it better? Then just get up and do it!"

The First Lady was joined at the event by Dr. Dan Jurman, Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Advocacy and Reform, an office created by Executive Order to advocate for people whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Jurman extended an invitation to all to find a way, large or small, and work within whatever capacity available to show solidarity to those who have been marginalized.

"Expel hate with love, expel division with unity," Jurman said.

Solidarity was a resounding theme of the event in Jenkintown. "[Symbol of Solidarity](#)" is the new feature-length documentary film from first time filmmaker, Philadelphia native, and MTV producer, Esteban Serrano, and writer-producer, Eric Bhanudas Blackerby. The documentary explores how Brian "bbsketch" Bowens, a Jenkintown-based Black artist, used his gifts to help the community find its voice during the troubling summer of 2020.

At today's Day of Racial Healing event, Serrano shared that he desires for his contributions as an artist to be uplifting, an example for how a community can come together and support its neighbors. Serrano noted that the First Lady shares an artist's heart. He repeated her question, "What can we do?" And then Serrano answered,

“I am here today because of my response to the First Lady’s question – ‘what can we do?’. The Symbol of Solidarity film presents an America that we all deserve to live in.”

Today’s Day of Racial Healing event included artistic performances by The Jenkintown Junior/Senior High School vocal ensemble, The BelleTones, and poetic performance by Berks County poet Dr. Phillip Jeffrey Tietbohl, [Poetry That Works](#).

The event concluded with OAR Deputy Director, Victor Cabral, who shared the podium with his nine-year-old daughter, Bella Cabral, noting that he wanted her to witness this historic day in Jenkintown and this moment in Pennsylvania history. Cabral said, “To see the power we have as human beings when we stand together in solidarity, build community and set an example for future generations, a world where we can acknowledge the pain of our history and extend compassion and unconditional love and recognize our shared humanity.”

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