Dear Friends,

The racial supremacy-fueled march in Charlottesville and terrible violence against counter-demonstrators last month forced the nation to reopen the dialogue on bigotry and intolerance and how best to confront them. It also begged some important questions: Do we know and accept the truths of our history? Do we understand how our ancestors were viewed, and how they were treated, when they came to these shores? How do we see our diversity, including the diversity that current immigrants bring to the American fabric? Do we view our growing diversity as reinforcing the American identity?

At Leviticus, we see our work supporting organizations serving diverse communities of low-income individuals and families as a way to provide opportunity for vulnerable people whose voices are often not heard in the cacophonous debate among those with power. We are grateful for the support of our members, investors and all of our partners as we choose to look ahead with hope and optimism.

For decades, RUPCO has been a leading provider of affordable housing in New York’s Hudson Valley, creating hundreds of new homes in the region. RUPCO has had its greatest impact in its hometown of Kingston, where it now owns and manages 117 housing units, including the recently completed Lace Mill, a 55-unit live-work residence for artists.

This year, with our lending support, RUPCO expanded into economic development work for the first time, another step in advancing its new creative placemaking strategy. Its first commercial project is a bold one: the revitalization of a vacant 70,000-square-foot warehouse in Kingston. The planned anchor tenant, a nonprofit, will use up to 55,000 square feet as a film studio, post-production space, and office space, bringing the enormous economic potential of the film industry to Kingston, which has a poverty rate of 16%. The nonprofit will also provide local residents access to entertainment and technology jobs and workforce training. We partnered with NeighborWorks Capital to provide RUPCO a flexible $1.9 million loan to quickly acquire this building, allowing them to gain site control and the time they needed to secure tax credits to fund the project.

Just blocks north of downtown Syracuse, New York, the area around Butternut and Townsend Streets has long been a site of unmet potential: several lots are vacant or underused, and each nearby block is home to blighted and abandoned properties. Since forming in Syracuse 28 years ago, Housing Visions, a sustainable neighborhood revitalization company, has specialized in transforming areas just like this one into places of stability and opportunity.
Leviticus welcomes donations of any size, which increase our lending capacity and allow our donors to give back to the communities where they live and work. Please consider donating today.

Leviticus’ investors enjoy a financial return on their investment while supporting high-impact projects in low-income areas. To learn more about investing, click here.

From the first five Sisters who arrived in Polonia, Wisconsin in 1874 to educate local immigrant children, to the thousands of Sisters who have joined since, the Felician Sisters of North America have been committed to serving economically disadvantaged people across the continent, from New York to Northern Canada. Today, their services include education, health care, senior care, and a range of social services. The work of the Sisters to bring afterschool programs, medical assistance, and food and clothing to rural Kingtree, South Carolina won Catholic Extension Magazine’s Lumen Christi Award in 2012.

While their work in communities is the face of the Felician Sisters, they also know they can make an impact through the portfolio of investments they use to secure the future of their members. In late 2016, the Sisters decided to expand the impact of this “silent resource” by investing in Leviticus Fund. We are proud to introduce them as a new member investor, and we thank them for trusting us to put their resources towards the causes they value.