

**Video Entry**

2 messages

**Zoila Runge** <zrunge@unionsettlement.org>  
To: Evan Forman <eforman@unionsettlement.org>

Fri, Jun 19, 2020 at 4:19 PM

Good Afternoon Evan,

Instead of a video I wanted to share with you a letter. Thank you.

**CoronaVirus, a Lost Wedding, and Black Lives Matter**

I really don't know how to start this but the only thing I know is that I wanted to write about the nightmare, which we are living at this moment, but maybe you ask yourself "what's going on?" I know that all people in the world are living a nightmare with this pandemic. When I think about the situation just for a little while, I see it just like a movie, and I say to myself it's not a movie, it is a reality so I stopped thinking about this nightmare. It began in March 2020, me and my family were very happy because my daughter would get married on March 21<sup>st</sup>. My daughter who lives in Chicago, called me every day to tell me that she and her fiancé were working so hard and were so excited in making the last preparations for their coming wedding. Back in December 2019, the news said that a virus called coronavirus was discovered in China, at that moment I thought most of the people in New York City were not concerned about the virus because nothing bad had happened in the big city. Back in China a national doctor tried to alert all people in China about the dangerous virus. This smart doctor who discovered the killing virus, later died from this strange sickness called corona virus. I heard on the news that he was a hero and I agreed with that, he's the first hero in this very sad situation. In January 2020, I went to my workplace at Union Settlement, where I work as Assistant teacher. I started to feel sad about the corona virus because on the news they were talking of the dangers of the virus. I remember asking my coworker if she knew about the corona virus, and she was very scared about it. She and I continued to work with the kids, we played, we made different activities, dancing, singing, as if nothing was happening in the world. People in New York City were working on a daily basis without wearing masks because people didn't know about the virus that was upon us. Then came February and everyone continued working. All I could hear was news about China. People in New York City kept minding their own affairs, still unaware of something bad coming their way. People were happy and still working as they used to do it, because the news continued to say that the virus was in China. Our students were happy in their schools, parents were walking their children to school and picking them from school.

Everyone was still happy, they were returning from her jobs, walking or by train, taxis, buses or their own cars. It was only China where people were getting infected and dying.

Just in the beginning of March, everybody still never thought that the coronavirus would arrive to the city very soon and change our daily beautiful routines. Drastically the news now started to talk more about the deadly virus spreading in Italy and Spain where too many people were dying.

My daughter's wedding arrangements were in the last stages and the entire family was waiting for this beautiful moment. We are counting down each single day to celebrate the wedding, my daughter and her fiancé were inviting friends from other countries, people that did not know Guatemala and they were happy waiting to be in the wedding and to explore Guatemala.

At Union Settlement, everything was normal in the classes, making activities like singing, marching, drawing, coloring, painting and playing all day, it was funny, beautiful and nice.

I knew that something was not really normal because of the news, always talking about Covid19 and then my daughter called me and said there was no choice that they have to cancel the wedding, nobody could travel because there are restrictions in almost all countries. My daughter was so sad, for all the families and friends too. Hours later Union Settlement through their executive Director Mr. Davis Nocenti, announced that all programs of Union Settlement are going to be closed, because of Covid 19. Teachers at Union Settlement Daycare, need to continue to work at home to keep in touch with the kids and their parents, doing trainings about teacher strategies, zoom meetings, despite a sad situation regarding Covid19. To this is added the killing of an unarmed black man George Floyd, caused by the police brutality and discrimination. The police officers responsible were not arrested immediately. This has brought to my mind the killing of Amaduo Diallo who was killed by the police for no reason in his own house. Even more innocent people like Eric Garner, Lakuan Mcdonald and much more black people, because of the discrimination from the police. We need put a stop to all this discrimination. The killing of George Floyd caused protests in United States, because enough is enough and again the discrimination that exists in this country allowed police who are supposed to protect and serve actually commit murder. It is too much and people are tired that this kind of bad police don't get the punishment that they deserve.

I'm proud to work with Union Settlement because they not only gave me a job but it is also an institution which creates values and completely against racism and discrimination. I loved knowing that Union Settlement through its executive Director Davis Nocenti stood up for the murder of George Floyd and black lives everywhere. I myself join this fight struggle to stop these horrendous crimes against our black community brothers.

I want to add that during the protest there were other black people killed by the police and it is necessary that in peace we need to demand respect and equality for all people in the United States. We need to be anti-racist and fight against racism because it is taking so many innocent lives.

Sincerely,

Zoila Runge

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**Evan Forman** <eforman@unionsettlement.org>  
To: Zoila Runge <zrunge@unionsettlement.org>

Mon, Jun 22, 2020 at 9:33 AM

Hi Zoila. Thank you so much for sending this letter. Your words are so heartfelt and moving, and I really appreciate you sharing them with us.

I hope you and your family are well.

Best,

Evan  
[Quoted text hidden]

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**Evan Forman**

Director of Government Grants and Contracts

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