**South Orange – Maplewood**

 **Against Hate Collective**

SOMA Against Hate is a collective of houses of worship and community groups in South Orange and Maplewood. The collective formed in the wake of efforts by an anti-Semitic, white supremacist hate group to recruit in our communities by posting flyers in prominent places in our two towns.

We have come together because, while we have all issued statements condemning this group in emphatic terms, we recognize that combating white supremacy requires a more sustained effort. While we would like to believe that “it can’t happen here” in our intentionally inclusive and welcoming community, we know that these groups prey on the disaffected among us. We also know that in the absence of a sustained response, these groups may escalate their activities and jeopardize the fragile and hard-fought safety that Jewish and Muslim people, LGBTQ people, African-Americans and other people of color feel in our communities.

 SOMA Against Hate plans a multi-pronged campaign to combat white supremacy in our community. The elements are as follows:

 We will post banners in a prominent place in both South Orange and Maplewood, bearing a strong message that our communities are for ALL people and that everyone belongs here.

We are printing lawn signs for community members to put outside of their homes, to put any merchants of intolerance on notice that their message has no audience here AND to signal our support to our neighbors from marginalized communities.

We will be hosting a number of forums to educate the community of the number and nature of hate groups operating locally in our home state. We will also educate parents and other community members on the various recruiting methods used and the warning signs to watch for to determine whether someone is coming under the sway of white supremacists.

The Community Coalition on Race will act as fiscal agent for collective so donations to help defray costs can be made by check to The Community Coalition on Race, 516 Prospect Street, Maplewood NJ 07040 with the memo saying SOMA AHC Sign. Or on the website at <https://www.communitycoalitiononrace.org/donate> and indicate SOMA AHC sign in the comment field.

The members of SOMA Against Hate Collective are:

Council on American Islamic Relations of NJ

Congregation Beth El

Durand Hedden House and Garden

First Baptist Church of South Orange

First Presbyterian & Trinity Church

Kol Rina

North Jersey Pride

Morrow Memorial Methodist Church

Prospect Presbyterian Church

Oheb Shalom Congregation

Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom Essex County Chapter

SOMA Action

SOMA Community Coalition on Race

SOMA Justice

South Mountain YMCA

Temple Sharey Tefilo-Israel

For more information contact Marcia Bloomberg at marcia.bloomberg@gmail.com

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