

# ACTION REPORT ON RACIAL EQUITY



Greater Milwaukee  
**FOUNDATION**  
*greater together*

Summer 2022



# How will the Greater Milwaukee Foundation achieve its vision of A Milwaukee for All?

Although no organization can change our region's outlook alone, we choose to point our compass toward racial equity and inclusion. We are marshaling the full strength of our resources and reputation to close chronic gaps in community and individual well-being. We are working to expel racism from systems that should serve all of society so we may realize our region's creative, social and economic potential. We are bringing together the largest possible coalition of the willing to invest in a future where everyone thrives.

And we are doing this loudly and unapologetically because our work is about impact, not intentions.

A Milwaukee for All is a big dream, fashioned from many individual and collective actions, accumulating impact over time. We have launched this biannual *Action Report on Racial Equity* to demonstrate the Foundation's impact, large and small, qualitative and quantitative, formal and anecdotal, internal and external. We aim to be transparent about our role and the reality of the issues we're facing. Each edition will help us stay accountable to our community and one another, and, hopefully, will inspire others to join us in taking action to build the thriving, equitable community we envision.



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# Greater Milwaukee Foundation's FOUR-PART STRATEGY FOR BUILDING **A MILWAUKEE FOR ALL**

Our community's many assets are the strength upon which, together, we will build a Milwaukee for all. But there is a fault line running through the systems that should be supporting and sustaining our community: Systemic racism is the root cause of many of the disparities and inequities that hold back our entire region and cause ongoing harm to Black and Brown people in greater Milwaukee. With racial equity and inclusion as our North Star, the Foundation is more fully becoming an anti-racist organization. We are listening, learning and changing our approach to how we marshal the resources, ideas and partnerships needed to achieve change together. We are committed to addressing the racism that perpetuates ongoing harm and disparities in our community.

**REIMAGINE  
PHILANTHROPY:**  
Time, treasure, talent  
& ties

**CATALYZE SYSTEMS  
CHANGE:**  
Lasting solutions  
to structural  
inequities

## **FOUR-PART STRATEGY GUIDING OUR WORK TOGETHER**

**BUILD INCLUSIVE  
CULTURE:**  
Lead from within,  
as an anti-racist  
organization

**CONVENE  
AND FOLLOW  
COMMUNITY VOICE:**  
Resident power  
& priorities

## REIMAGINE PHILANTHROPY:

Time, treasure,  
talent & ties



Philanthropy is for all of us, and to bring about the scale of change needed to ensure that everyone thrives, we must think differently about what philanthropy means, whom it includes and how it works.

The Foundation is expanding our understanding of philanthropy to recognize how all forms of generosity, including financial gifts, volunteerism, relationships and other commitments of time and expertise, all contribute to growing resources and unifying impact.

The Foundation is committed to expanding our table as a partner of choice for donors, nonprofits and all voices that form the fabric of our diverse community.

### ACTION EXAMPLES

- \$700 million Greater Together campaign inspiring donor coinvestment in ThriveOn Collaboration, early childhood education, housing, impact investing, flexible funding
- Prioritizing Black- and Brown-led organizations in grantmaking
- Modifying grantmaking processes to be more responsive, inclusive
- Engaging the Community Adviser and Ambassador Network, formerly known as the Young Professional Adviser Council

## CATALYZE SYSTEMS CHANGE:

Lasting solutions to  
structural inequities



To address disparities on a communitywide scale, we must remake the systems that impact daily life now and for the long term.

For our city and region to prosper, we need our Black and Brown communities to thrive, yet because of systemic racism, they face the greatest barriers to opportunity.

The Foundation is focusing investments, advocacy, and amplifying voice around these interrelated community priorities:

- Health equity and the ThriveOn Collaboration
- Early childhood education
- Housing
- Equitable economic opportunity

### ACTION EXAMPLES

- ThriveOn Collaboration's holistic approach to health, social and economic equity
- Cross-sector partnerships: MKE Early Childhood Education Coalition, Community Development Alliance
- Creating communitywide civic action teams for a unified response to the pandemic, including advocacy for use of federal and state relief funding
- Partnering to develop a communitywide anti-racist framework to measure collective progress in the form of power, representation and policy

## BUILD INCLUSIVE CULTURE:

Lead from within,  
as an anti-racist  
organization



As a region with some of the largest racial disparities in America, embedding racial equity and inclusion values throughout the organization's policies, practices and strategies is essential to achieving our vision.

Our commitment to more fully becoming an anti-racist organization is necessary for us to serve Milwaukee with integrity, and our learning may inform and serve others.

We aim to put racial equity commitments into practice in a manner that leads from within and inspires others to join us in making historic change. The way we participate in personal and institutional transformation will sharpen our external engagement.

### ACTION EXAMPLES

- Created position of chief diversity and inclusion officer
- Board learning and leading on racial equity actions and accountability
- Racial equity and inclusion days of learning
- Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee aligning organizationwide goals
- Amending human resources practices for greater inclusion and named Juneteenth as a formal holiday
- Updated Foundation bylaws, ethics policy and created an anti-hate policy

## CONVENE AND FOLLOW COMMUNITY VOICE:

Resident power &  
priorities



Effective and equitable solutions require recentering community. Building representation and trust includes bringing residents and stakeholders with lived experience to the table to discuss priorities and needs, generate ideas and share decision-making power with those whose lives are affected by the issues and potential solutions.

To be a trusted partner, the Foundation uses its convening power to connect people across neighborhoods, organizations and sectors to tackle the greatest issues, together.

The Foundation then focuses resources where resident voice and deeper partnerships will result in lasting change.

### ACTION EXAMPLES

- Resident-led grantmaking through community advisory councils
- ThriveOn Collaboration visioning sessions, advisory council and ongoing community engagement
- A Milwaukee for All educational convening series
- MKE Responds, Reasons for Hope MKE and small grants program
- Operating grants for grassroots organizations



## LEADING from the inside

Advancing racial equity authentically in our community starts with change inside the Foundation. Becoming a truly anti-racist organization includes focusing on staff learning and culture, revising policies and practices and developing new structures of governance – all of which are giving us the tools, understanding and humility to lead on important matters of race in greater Milwaukee.

This is, and always will be, work in progress. While the Foundation's internal efforts in racial equity and inclusion span decades, our vision of A Milwaukee for All has added rocket fuel to our actions within.

# BEHIND THE SCENES OF CHANGE

## DEDICATED LEADERSHIP

Aligning our people with our purpose: Kenyatta Sinclair named Foundation's first chief diversity and inclusion officer.

"The Greater Milwaukee Foundation's racial equity and inclusion work is fundamental to advancing our North Star. It requires the acknowledgement of contributions to systems of inequity, in addition to being self-aware, fully accountable, intentional and actively invested in embedding changes that shift knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and yield equitable outcomes for all."



## LEARNING AND CULTURE

Providing knowledge and tools to staff and Board to embody and act on racial equity values.

- **Culture committee created** – for staff-led education, dialogue and continuous improvement
- **Days of learning** – ongoing series for all staff on matters of racial equity, with content integrated as regular part of Board and committee meetings
- **Racial equity and inclusion toolkits** – being developed for use by Board and staff in meetings and conversations

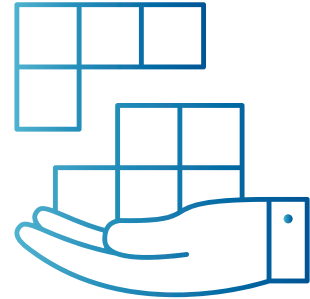


# BEHIND THE SCENES OF CHANGE

## POLICIES

Ensuring that racial equity and inclusion values are codified and consistently applied.

- **Anti-hate provision** – added to ethics and nondiscrimination policies, which are now incorporated into all Foundation policies and practices
- **Employee handbook** – updated with an inclusive dress code that ensures that all staff are welcome to wholly represent themselves in the workplace
- **Recognizing Juneteenth** – added as an organizational holiday



## PRACTICES

Changing internal systems and conducting Foundation business in ways that specifically advance racial equity.

- **Racial equity & inclusion goals** – embedded in individual and departmental annual performance goals



50% increase in  
**administrative spending**  
with diverse vendors over five years,  
up to **\$2 million**

**Investment managers of color**  
working with the Foundation's  
corporate portfolio now exceed  
**22%** and rising through  
intentional commitment



# GOVERNANCE

Prioritizing inclusion and lived experience at highest levels of decision-making.

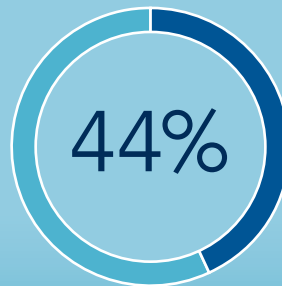
- **Changed trust document and bylaws** – ensuring that the Board includes members from historically underrepresented communities



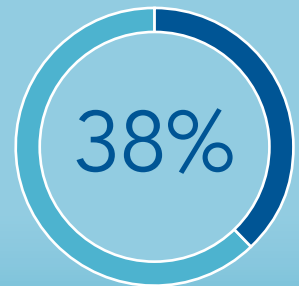
**50%** Board of Directors representation by people of color

Committed to increasing committee diversity from **37% to 50%**

## TEAM REPRESENTATION



Staff of color in management role



Racial diversity among Foundation staff



## LESSONS LEARNED ON THE JOURNEY

- The work is hard, uncomfortable and imperfect
- There is no straight line to change
- The white supremacist origins and power dynamics of philanthropy cannot be ignored
- Just as in community, internal trust is built over time
- Not everyone will agree, so stay true to your North Star

# TRANSFORM

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

SO IT WORKS FOR ALL CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY

Every family deserves access to high-quality care and education for their child. A safe, nurturing space that helps their child grow and succeed. A place that gives parents peace of mind while they participate in the workforce so they can invest in their family's future.

In Milwaukee, more than half of Black and Brown children live in neighborhoods where there is inadequate access to this type of care and early education. And the average Milwaukee family pays one-third of its household income toward child care, well above national guidelines.

Over the past several years, we have deepened our efforts toward raising awareness of these challenges, increasing investment in the work of area child care providers and advocating for



**\$3.4M**  
invested in early  
childhood education  
since 2019

**\$5M**  
newly committed  
to neighborhood  
providers

changes to the sector. United with providers, community partners and policymakers, we are working to reinvent a system that can work for more families in our community.

Since 2019, we have invested more than \$3.4 million toward early childhood education.

A close-up photograph of a young girl with a joyful expression, wearing a pink knit hat with large pink pom-poms and a purple jacket. She is looking through green vertical bars, likely part of a playground structure. The word "ING" is overlaid in large, colorful letters (pink, orange, yellow) on the left side of the image.

# ING

How we are addressing the gaps  
and building for the future:

**Reimagining philanthropy**

As 80 percent of a child's critical brain development happens within the first three years of their life, it's imperative that they are given the best environment in which to learn. Over the past several years, we have invested in capital improvements ranging from renovating indoor and outdoor spaces to create larger and more engaging areas to installing toilets and sinks inside classrooms to help strengthen personal hygiene skills and save instructional time. These projects have supported schools that largely serve Black and Latino student populations.



## Coordinating COVID-19 relief efforts

The early childhood education sector was operating on razor-thin margins prior to the pandemic. COVID-19 sent it into a free fall. A diverse, 45-member MKE Early Childhood Education Coalition, led by our educational partnership, Milwaukee Succeeds, worked with funding partners and local providers to assess and address equipment and resource needs so

providers could maintain a safe environment for their little learners. This included rapidly deploying unrestricted stabilization grants to child care providers in predominantly Black and Brown neighborhoods in Milwaukee to keep their doors open to families as well as providing air purification units to 60 sites, impacting the lives of nearly 4,000 children.

### Stabilization grants help sector confront challenges with COVID-19

**443**  
unrestricted  
grants  
(total \$1.2 million)\*

\*\$100,000 from Home Grown  
Child Care Emergency Fund

**7,197**  
total children served

**96%**  
of the programs  
remained open and  
serving families

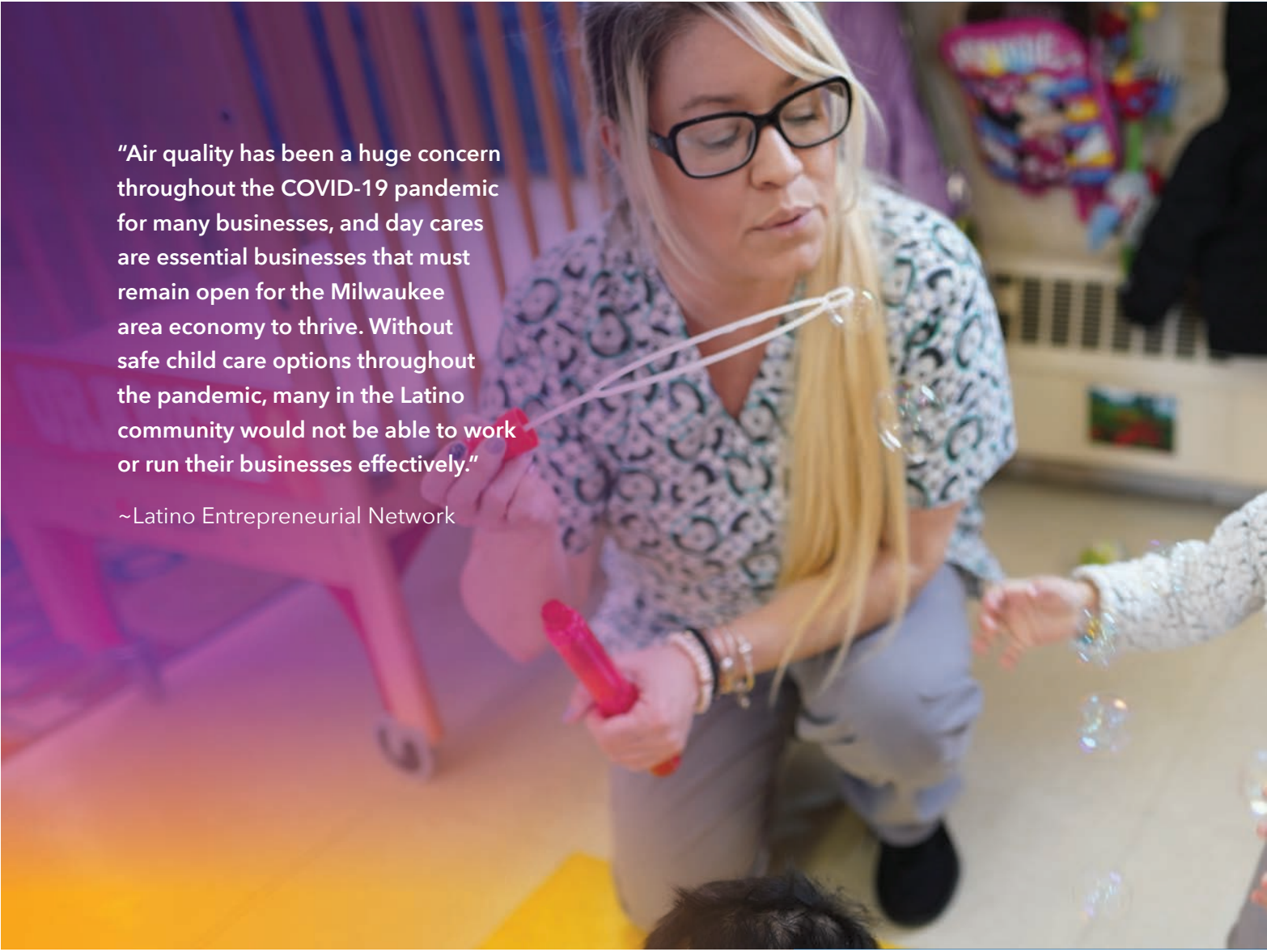
**95%**  
of whom were  
children of color



"I'm grateful for the leadership and the vision of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation to invest in early childhood education. They understand that high-quality early childhood education is a game changer. The way they are leading in this is phenomenal. I'm very appreciative of the investment they are making – both in funding and by their actions."

*~ Ann Terrell, MKE Early Childhood Education Coalition member*





"Air quality has been a huge concern throughout the COVID-19 pandemic for many businesses, and day cares are essential businesses that must remain open for the Milwaukee area economy to thrive. Without safe child care options throughout the pandemic, many in the Latino community would not be able to work or run their businesses effectively."

~Latino Entrepreneurial Network

## Systems change critical to goal of readying Black and Brown children for school

To transform a system from fragile to flourishing, we need to shift policies and public funding. 2021 was a transformational year in terms of public investment in early childhood education. The MKE Early Childhood Education Coalition evolved into a powerful unified voice for securing increased funding. Key to this work was ensuring that the people who would be impacted by the policies were the ones at the table helping craft them. Family- and center-based providers

advocated for and informed the investment and policy decisions, specifically those addressing recruitment, retention, compensation and professionalization of the early childhood education workforce.

The coalition also played a critical role in raising awareness of the challenges within the sector by participating in local, statewide and national convenings as well as speaking to local media.





**The Foundation's advocacy led directly to securing a \$7 million investment from the city of Milwaukee in American Rescue Plan Act funds for the early childhood education workforce:**

**\$5M** for stipends to increase early educator compensation and retention

**\$2M** to strengthen the workforce pipeline, with a focus on men of color

**Our coalition work informed and advocated for state investment, including:**

**\$46M (and counting)**

for Milwaukee providers to stay open, keep staff employed and safely serve children. Nearly half of Milwaukee providers reported they would have closed without this support.

**\$29M**

in the state budget to increase Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy rates statewide, including for 9,000 low-income working families in Milwaukee, who could see an increase of up to \$310/month.

# 2021 THE LEDGER

Donor generosity, strong investment performance and effective grantmaking contribute to healthy financial picture and deep community impact for 2021.

TOTAL  
ASSETS  
**\$1.2B**

as of 12/31/2021

## GRANTS

**\$65.1M**

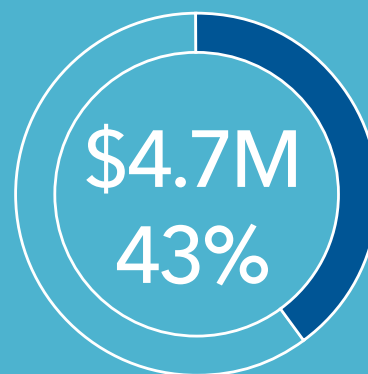
Total grants paid to nonprofits

**\$53.8M**

Donor  
recommended  
funds

**\$11.3M**

Board  
directed



Discretionary grants  
awarded to organizations  
led by people of color



## GIFTS

**\$58.1M**

Total contributions made by  
donors to new and existing funds  
(third highest year)

**\$33,533** average size of  
contribution in 2021

**78**

total number of new  
funds created in 2021

**1,481**

total number of  
charitable funds



# GREATER TOGETHER

THE CAMPAIGN TO BUILD A MILWAUKEE FOR ALL

Now in its public phase, Greater Together, the Foundation's comprehensive philanthropic campaign aims to advance the building blocks of a better life through transformational partnership and investment.

Overall Goal

**\$700M**

Total raised (as of 5/13/2022)

**\$530M**



## CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

Total goal for campaign priorities

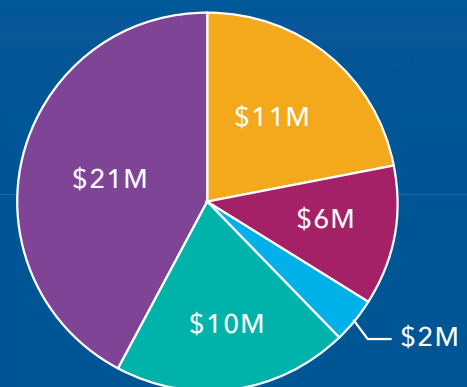
**\$50M**

Dedicated toward campaign priorities (as of 5/13/2022)

**\$20M**



Campaign goal priorities



- ThriveOn Collaboration
- Early Childhood Care & Education
- Housing
- Impact Investing
- Flexible Funds



With the Greater Together Campaign, we are addressing the tough, subtle and complex issues felt deeply by residents, and everyone can play an important role."

~ Cecelia Gore, Greater Together Campaign Co-Chair

# catalyst IMPACT INVESTING

This sustainable tool for social and economic impact generates a financial return for reinvestment in future projects. It is one way the Foundation is reimagining philanthropy to support underestimated and disinvested communities.

## THE COMMITMENT:

# \$30 million

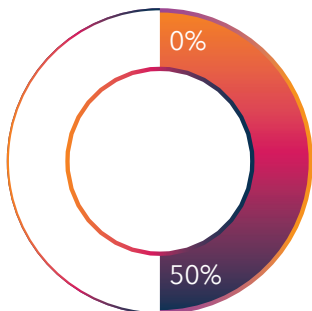
to advance equitable economic opportunities where investments have historically been scarce.

## THE STATUS:

approximately

# 50%

of commitment met in  
less than two years



## The investments:

- JCP Construction
- ThriveOn Small Business Loans
- Gateway Capital venture capital fund
- Martin Luther King Economic Development Corporation Five Points Lofts development
- Near West Side Partners Travis Block development
- ThriveOn King development

# catalyst **ThriveOn** COLLABORATION

## A historic, community-centered, place-based collaboration involving

3 partners focused for 3 plus years on  
3 neighborhoods to advance racial equity  
in 5 program areas:

- Early childhood education
- Economic opportunity
- Housing
- Health and wellness
- Social cohesion

“I’m grateful to the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. They have been at all of our meetings, and we really appreciate them coming to hear what we have to say, what our needs are and how they can help us.”

*~ Lennie Mosley, Halyard Park resident and Community Advisory Council member*



STONE:  
Construction has begun on  
ThriveOn King  
2153 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive

20  
JUNE 22



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Thank you to all who are advancing  
racial equity in our community.

**No one can take on a challenge like this alone:**

No individual, no institution, no neighborhood. It takes all of us  
working together. There is a seat for everyone at our table.

[greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/strategic-plan](https://greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/strategic-plan)

**Go to the next level with us:**

Attend the upcoming A Milwaukee for All convening Oct. 28 with  
Tonya Allen, president of the McKnight Foundation.

[greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/amfa2022](https://greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/amfa2022)



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