

# BELOVED COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT FY21



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## INTRODUCTION

Hello Beloved,

This year has been one of great joy and progress for Beloved Community. We have experienced expansion both internally and externally through team advancements, enlarged territory and engaged partnership. Though I am extremely proud of the impact you will see within this document, I am most proud of our royal team's dedication to designing a culture of joy and rest.

This ongoing fight to disrupt systems that bind Black and other marginalized communities will long outlive us, what took 400 years to build, may take 400 years to dismantle. Yet we have found the fervor to continue creating pathways towards racial equity that will also outlive us. While standing in service of this work our team has made a choice to seek joy, to stand in for ourselves as aggressively as we stand in for others and to know we deserve the same full bodied wellness we wish for the people we serve.

I believe as a direct result of this choice, this action, we are finding more community and greater impact. As you navigate this document, please know behind every project, every data point and every success there is a dedicated human being living the impact of these unjust systems while challenging and changing them.

**Congratulations to the Beloved Community Royal Team on another year of progress. Another year of amplifying the voices of many who have been pushed to the margins and most importantly, a year of seeking your own joy in the process.**

With infinite love,

Rhonda



## IN LOVING MEMORY

While death is inevitably a part of life, that truth doesn't make it any easier to say goodbye to those who have transitioned.

These recent racial and health pandemics have forced us to lean on the teachings of those who fought before us. We would be remiss not to acknowledge the loss of so many pioneers of Black and Brown resilience, empowerment and leadership in 2021.

We say thank you for their sacrifices, their leadership, their grace and ultimately their heart.

**Abebech Gobena**  
**Alcee Hastings**  
**Alvin Sykes**  
**bell hooks**  
**Bishop Desmond Tutu**  
**Bob Moses**  
**Carl Bean**  
**Colin Powell**  
**Consuwella Dotson Africa**  
**Douglas Turner Ward**  
**Earl Old Person**  
**Glen Ford**  
**Gloria Richardson**  
**Greg Tate**  
**Henrietta Turnquest**  
**Jovita Moore**  
**LaDonna Allard**  
**Lee Evans**  
**Lucille Times**  
**Marie Wicox**  
**Martha White**  
**Melvin van Peebles**  
**Meredith C. Anding Jr.**  
**Paul H. Brock**  
**Robert Ashby**  
**Shelia Washington**  
**Shirley McBay**

**"The individuals who are part of that beloved community are already in our lives. We do not need to search for them. We can start where we are. We can begin our journey with love, and love will always bring us back to where we started."**

**bell hooks**



## WHO WE ARE

### CORE VALUES

#### BLACK LIVES MATTER

**Today, and always, Beloved Community honors and centers our Black communities.**

What we talk about in our sessions is not just academic jargon, or hot topics for our partners to think about and discuss. These topics of race, systems of oppression, and marginalization have real, life and death consequences for our Black communities. We say centering Black lives because we believe that the root of White supremacy is anti-blackness specifically. We believe it is crucial that you continuously interrogate and address the ways that biases, racism, white supremacy, and intersectionality impact your decisions and the ways that your organizations operate. We also require ourselves and the organizations that we work with to center Black joy, Black futures, and Black contributions to our history, institutions, and systems.

#### WE BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE CHANGE SYSTEMS.

People are the greatest unit of change. When people embrace shared values, they maintain systems that amplify those values. Everyone has an obligation to make personally relevant change. When our leaders change, they accelerate systemic change for the organizations they lead. The default systems in our country are designed to segregate. When we question and challenge the default, we can dismantle it and build equitable systems in its place.



### VISION

**Our ultimate vision is to create regional tipping points for greater racial and economic equity. Beloved Community is based in New Orleans, LA, with regional hubs throughout the Midwest and MidSouth. Additionally, we work with national and international partners to support individual businesses and corporations.**

### ACTION

**In our first four years, Beloved Community has supported 400 schools and businesses providing direct training to 1,157 leaders who work with up to 285,000 employees.**

## CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Critical race theory or CRT teaches that racism is ingrained in U.S. institutions and that people who are white benefit from it. Essentially, it is American history told with integrity.

In 2017, the Southern Poverty Law Center had a study that showed only 8% of students knew one of the main causes for the Civil War was slavery. **If you don't teach about slavery you effectively disappear 243 years of American history.** In Louisiana, where Beloved Community is headquartered, there were two attempts to pass a bill that would prohibit teaching that "the United States or Louisiana is systematically racist or sexist." It would bar giving students or employees information that "teaches, advocates, acts upon or promotes divisive concepts," including those 243 years of slavery. Thanks to a strong policy advocacy coalition, the anti-CRT legislation was vetoed in Louisiana. Unfortunately, similar legislation has been passed in 14 states, threatening state funding to districts and/or disciplinary actions for individual educators who use a CRT perspective in their teaching.

For one week in August, Beloved team members participated in the Annual Critical Race Theory Summer School by the African American Policy Forum (AAPF). AAPF is a think tank headed by Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, one of the most influential anti-racist educators and critical race theorists in the country. The CRT Summer School was designed to help folk across sectors understand the politically-motivated, unwarranted attacks against truth-telling in K-12 schools and institutions of higher education.

This summer school confirmed, if we do not challenge the integrity of storytelling in our schools we allow the unethical erasure of important history that directly connects with the lived experiences of marginalized youth, Black youth, especially. **We must reconfigure our organizations, schools, and lives in ways that center the most marginalized communities.**

**Beloved Community is a fierce advocate of utilizing Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality in our own consulting practice and we encourage our partners and clients to continue the tradition of truth-telling that CRT challenges us to do.** If we are ever to move forward as a country in racially equitable and economically equitable ways, there must be a reckoning and re-telling of the American story, as it truly was.



**"The way we imagine discrimination or disempowerment often is more complicated for people who are subjected to multiple forms of exclusion. The good news is that intersectionality provides us a way to see it."**

**-Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw**

## REST

Image by Akua Naru, 2018



Our team often uses quotes and affirmations that support our mission and vision. These offerings come from people we respect, whose work aligns with where we are and where we hope to be. In this last year, our team has embedded the right to rest into our work. We have anchored our thinking in this offering from esteemed "Black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet", audre lorde.

"I had to examine, in my dreams as well as in my immune-function tests, the devastating effects of over extension. Overextending myself is not stretching myself. I had to accept how difficult it is to monitor the difference. Necessary for me as cutting down on sugar. Crucial. Physically. Psychically. **Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.**"

While often shortened for the sake of sharing, we offer the full quote here because our collective lived experiences have taught us what whole bodied wellness means. We ask ourselves 'Don't we deserve rest, too? Don't we deserve joy and good health?'

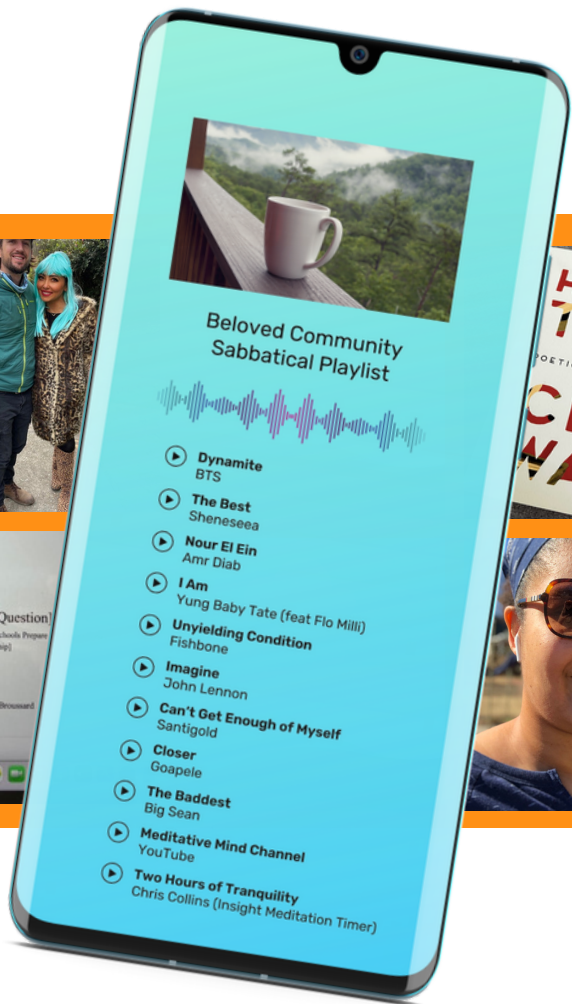
With a resounding and contemplative 'YES', we landed on a collective exhale. A really long sigh. A full belly breath. In February, our team went on sabbatical together. Not a retreat, not an internal strategic planning retreat with reflection built in, but a collective rest for the entire month.

**This was a radical act for us, investing in our own rest, especially as People of Color.**

## SABBATICAL

With the support of our holistic wellness coach, Jackie Oselen, we envisioned what rest would look and feel like in our bodies. The mere idea of intentional rest surfaced some pain for us. We were exhausted and yet we still associated work with self-worth. Some of us resisted the idea of collective rest - that it felt forced or artificial, or that we would lose momentum on our work. Spoiler alert: we didn't resolve any of these tensions. We listened. We held space for each other. We are now as committed to rest and wellness as we are to changing the world around us.

Before we started sabbatical, we named that this could not be a singular experience. Over the past year, we have incorporated rest into our regular cycles of work and micro-rest practices into our daily routines. The commitment to practicing rest together has created space for our team to normalize advocating for needs, stop overextending ourselves, and set healthier boundaries.



Photos of February's sabbatical experience by Beloved Community team members.

# 223

## EQUITY AUDITS

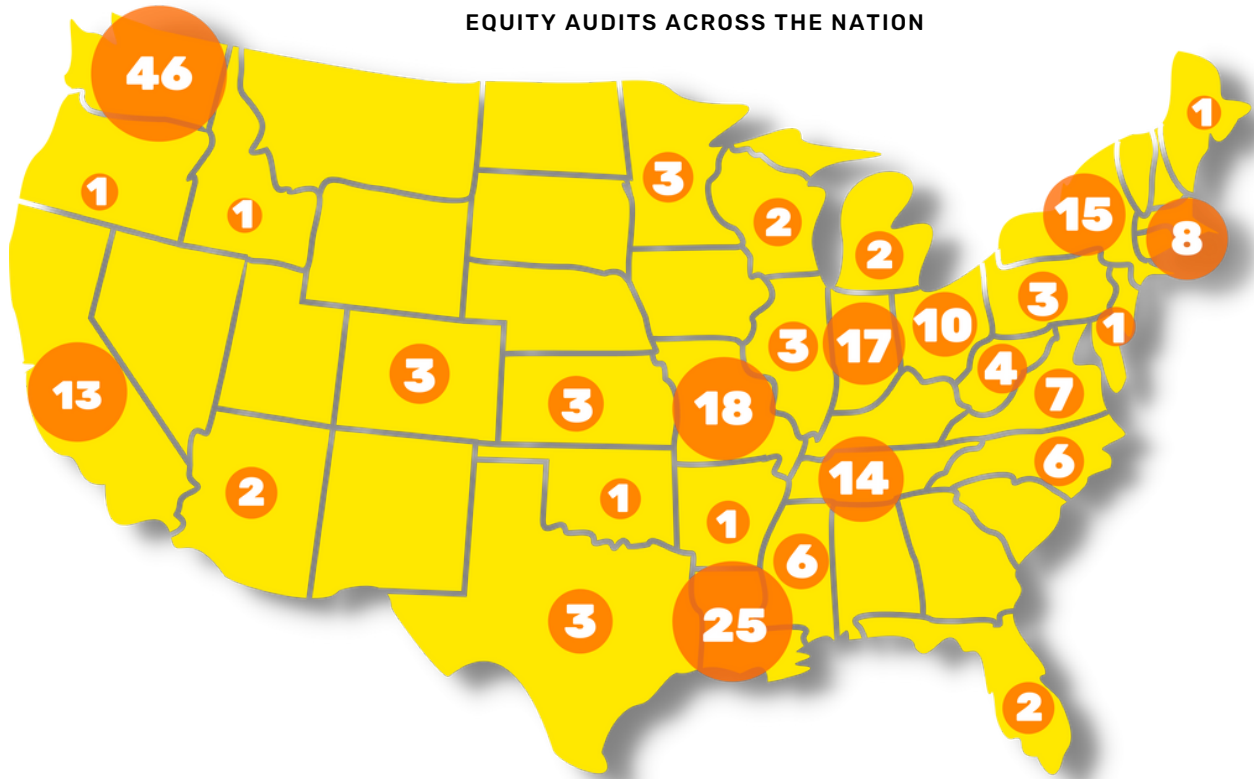
223 ORGANIZATIONS COMPLETED THE EQUITY AUDIT

# 2,766

## EQUITY LENS MAP

2,766 EMPLOYEES COMPLETED THE EQUITY LENS MAP

EQUITY AUDITS ACROSS THE NATION



# 108

Nonprofits  
Colleges  
Universities

# 93

K-12 Schools

# 22

For Profit  
Businesses

# 48k -

# 285k

Full -Time Staff  
Impacted



# IMPACT SNAPSHOT

**We believe that the region is the unit of change. In 2021, we deepened our work in four regions: New Orleans, Indianapolis, Kansas City and New England.**

In previous years, Beloved offered one cohort per year, either Equity in Schools or Equity at Work. With the growth of our team last year we were able to facilitate seven cohorts in four cities. It has been a joy to witness our team translate our model to new regions and sectors, while maintaining our culture of warm and effective relationships.

This prepares us to continue deepening regional footprints and national exploration.

In FY21 Beloved Community provided equity training for 556 organizational leaders via Deep Dive engagements: including workshop facilitation, leadership coaching, equity work plan development, and train-the-trainer support.

REGION	IMPACT
New Orleans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equity in Schools Cohort in New Orleans supporting 7 schools and education nonprofits.</li> <li>Equity at Work - Hospitality in New Orleans supporting 25 restaurant and hospitality leadership teams</li> </ul>
Indianapolis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equity In Schools Cohort in Indianapolis supporting 5 charter and innovation school founders in the development of their equity plans.</li> <li>Equity in Schools cohort in Indianapolis supporting 7 charter and innovation school leadership teams</li> <li>Equity At Work Cohort In Indianapolis supporting 6 nonprofit leadership teams</li> </ul>
Kansas City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equity in Schools cohort in Kansas City supporting 22 school district and LEA leadership teams</li> </ul>
New England Cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders of Color cohort in New England supporting 14 nonprofit leadership teams</li> </ul>

## INTERNAL EXPANSION

As our reach grew, so did our team. Our existing team stretched the breadth of their leadership to create warm and welcoming space for our newest team members.



**Malena Ernani**  
Associate Director  
Business Development



**Dr. Faith Kares**  
Senior Director  
Research & Impact



**Alisha Keig**  
Associate Director  
Equity in Schools



**Kevin Lewis**  
Associate Director  
Equity at Work



**Maurisa Li-A-Ping**  
Executive Assistant



**Yuliana Quintero**  
Associate Director  
Finance and Operations



**Patrizia Santos**  
Senior Research  
Coordinator



**Dr. Allisyn Swift**  
Associate Director  
Equity in Schools



**Lauren Young**  
Director  
Data & Analysis

## EQUITY IN SCHOOLS

The Equity in Schools team realized significant wins through our new virtual format which included six hour workshops, cohort specific web pages, consulting calls and community building icebreaker sessions. All new territory for the team but necessary for the times, amidst dual pandemics we were challenged with elevating our offerings in cyberspace, and are very proud of the results. The team under the direction of Dr. Nicole Caridad Ralston, made a strong pivot but maintained critical Beloved energies including: **constant interrogation of neutral positioning, action centered training and an engaging people-centered approach to equity practice.**

We launched our first all-virtual series with the New Orleans Equity in Schools cohort. The series ended successfully in March of 2021 and included:

### Community Works

**Bard Early College New Orleans**

**Edward P. Hynes Charter School**

**Lycée Francais New Orleans**

**Kipp New Orleans**

**Special Education Leadership Fellowship**

**Youth Run NOLA**

Each school or organization brought seven to nine members of their teams to the six cohort sessions. In total, about fifty people participated in the cohort. We supported each leadership team towards embedding sustainable diversity, equity, and inclusion practices into their ongoing work.

Read about our New Orleans Equity in School Cohort in this [blog](#) by Dr. Nicole Caridad Ralston.





**We appreciate and welcome feedback from our cohort members. You can find a full report with extensive client feedback in this [blog](#).**

**"I enjoyed each and every session and looked forward to my "DEI" day. I learned much about myself and my privilege. I have become less defensive and found it possible for me to have really hard race related conversations with my staff and my own family."**

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**"I really appreciate all that you have done and continue to do! This was a great experience and y'all role model so well of how to create that safe and vulnerable environment while talking about some really serious stuff! I hope to continue to work with and learn from the Beloved Community team!"**

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**"A lot of it was really having the space to think about and talk through these things (especially in a world where there are so many things to do and talk about already)! I also really loved being able to share these ideas with people outside of our team. I'm a big believer in community of practice and this was great space for that!"**



## Libertas College Prep (Los Angeles, CA)

Last fall, Beloved continued work with Libertas College Prep (Los Angeles, CA) to examine its inclusion practices and develop a vision for supporting the wellbeing of its whole community. Libertas was led through a series of self-reflection activities that culminated in an Equity Audit and community engagement training.

This project forged bonds among the Libertas community and equipped Libertas's leaders with the tools to remain responsive to their community, throughout and beyond the pandemic.



**“I think Beloved has served as this glue that has taken these different community stakeholders and made it so they are on this same ladder, like a stepping stone where there’s only room for growth and they’re bonded in this way, and really creating trust between these different groups...It made it so we are one team, and on the path to growth.”**

*Rhonda Broussard (far left) is the founder and CEO of Beloved Community, a nonprofit consulting firm focused on implementing regional, sustainable solutions for diversity, equity, and inclusion.*

Beloved helped Libertas to be more responsive to the whole school community they served in the context of the pandemic. We helped surface issues of equity that surrounded distance learning; language diversity; and maintaining caring relationships with children in the context of remote schooling. While this project's activities produced a sense of connection, trust, and hope for the Libertas community, this was only the first step. The outcome of those renewed bonds as well as the tools, strategies, and initial plans that Libertas walked away with are yet to be seen as Beloved only helped to lay the groundwork for a new beginning. You can access more information on the Libertas College Prep study, [here](#).

**Key  
Aspects  
of the  
Project**

**Community  
Councils**

**Interviews  
& Focus  
Groups**

**Equity  
Audit**

**Capacity  
Building  
Training**

## LEADERS OF COLOR COHORT

"Learning as a cohort really builds a great sense of community. I also felt well informed and well resourced. The timing for reminders and sharing of resources made me feel like I was still connected even during the interim between sessions."

Leaders of Color Cohort Member



Beloved partnered with the Nellie Mae Education Foundation to support fifteen New England based BIPOC led organizations through a year of deep dives and group coaching. A total of thirty leaders participated in this cohort led by Beloved's Dr. Nicole Caridad Ralston and Kevin Lewis.

Each organization participated in the following sessions;

- Culturally Responsive Management
- Fundraising led by Kishshana Palmer
- Dismantling Power: Towards Inclusive Leadership
- Conflict Analysis
- Radical & Communal Care from an Indigenous Perspective led by Jennifer Weston
- Strategic Planning

We were fortunate to partner with Dr. Annice Fisher, of Developing Capacity Coaching, to provide executive coaching for the organizational leaders in the cohort.

This cohort culminated in a convening titled Nourishing our Gardens: Centering Self Care & Solidarity to Dismantle White Supremacy. This space was intentionally created to explore how our community can work collectively to dismantle the delusion of white supremacy culture through intentionally centering care for ourselves and one another. The convening theme was inspired by Beloved's own internal work, placing rest and wellness at the center of our organization's culture. We look forward to supporting the next cohort of Leaders of Color in 2022.

"We really enjoyed curating this series for the BIPOC leaders in the Nellie Mae portfolio. The Convening was probably one of the highlights of the year because we beautifully crafted a space for BIPOC leaders to breathe, rest, and build solidarity with fellow leaders in their region. Throughout the entire cohort series, the relationships that we saw the leaders build amongst each other while wrestling with topics that impact their leadership and organization was another proud moment."

Dra. Nicole Caridad Ralston



## EQUITY AT WORK

### NEW ORLEANS HOSPITALITY INITIATIVE

Beloved Community expanded specifically into the world of hospitality this year. We launched a two-year hospitality cohort in New Orleans to guide restaurant, hotel, and opportunity youth nonprofit leaders on deepening DEI in the industry. Our goal is to support a hospitality industry that works for all people for all people, especially BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) who have been historically and systematically marginalized across industries, in this country. Each participant is now taking the next step towards creating policies and practices that forward equity with the support of Beloved Community facilitators.



*Left to Right: Chef Joshua Blue, Seafood Sally's | Chef Barbara Rodriguez, Ruth's Chris & Top Pop | Chef Syrena Johnson, Chef Syrena Johnson Catering | Chef Alex Anderson, Justine, Marji's Grill & V Mode | Chef Byron Bradley, 2Brothers1Love*

**We are excited to be partnering with the equity experts of Beloved Community to address the deep-seated issues of racial inequality in the hospitality industry. The businesses that applied and were selected to join the inaugural class have taken an important step as a cohort to creating equitable work environments where all employees thrive."**

**Lauren Darnell, Executive Director of Made in New Orleans.**



## RESEARCH

One thing we know about research is that it is inherently racist, exemplifying the African proverb, "Until the lions have their historians, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter." This proverb metaphorically describes how dominant groups inscribe power through historical narrative. In an effort to disrupt long standing assumptions of knowledge production and dissemination, Beloved Community successfully obtained a 5-year IRB (Institutional Review Board) this year. Beloved is one of roughly two dozen nonprofits in the country currently approved for IRB. This IRB allows our research department more autonomy over Beloved-led research as well as supporting the community partners and agencies who seek to develop research practices outside of higher education institutions.



# RESEARCH IS EMANCIPATORY.

## EQUITY IN SCHOOLS RESEARCH STUDY

We are in year two of our three year mixed methods research study on the impact of equity assessments on schools. At the study's completion we will have collected data from 300 to 400 schools. This study will strengthen the impact of Beloved Community's equity audit, as well as contribute to a body of literature on diverse-by-design schools.

## DEVELOPING THE DRIP CENTER

**This year, when our team began to ideate on the intersections of our work, we envisioned a practice that would support internal Beloved projects, deepen community engaged research, and move the needle on collective action: The DRIP Center (data, research, impact, and policy).** Members of our team in the DRIP Center support client-facing data, research, and policy needs. They collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data to help leaders develop data-driven strategies for their racial equity work plans. They develop applied research tools to help leaders leverage research in their equity and inclusion strategies.



## RESEARCH

The Beloved team contributed to many important conversations meant to de-colonize education, some of these contributions are expected to appear in the following publications:

- Submitted article titled **“Responding to the Times: Adapting an Evaluation Study During a Dual Pandemic.”** to the peer-reviewed academic journal International Journal for Research and Methods in Education.
- Book Chapter in **“Operationalizing Anti-Racism in School and Youth-Facing Leadership Practices”** appearing in Antiracist Leadership Preparation and Practice, by Dr. Dorime-Williams and Dr. Williams
- Book chapter on the role of Black leaders in cultivating critical consciousness in dual-language bilingual education (DLBE) for **“Black & Bilingual: De-Centering Whiteness in Dual Language Bilingual Education”** appearing in Activating Critical Consciousness in Dual Language Bilingual Education: From Policy to Pedagogy by Drs. Lisa Dorner, Deb Palmer, Claudia Cervantes-Soon, and Dan Heiman.



**“I consider my amplification of research as an equity issue as the biggest professional achievement as a member of this team. More specifically, I introduced the concept of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) outside of higher education as a revolutionary action and now we have our own!”**

**-Dr. Faith Kares**

## WHAT'S NEXT?

We raised \$2M to improve the efficiency of our Equity Audit tool. Thanks to support from generous funders, this fall we launched the beta version of Awa by Beloved, an enterprise software.

Touted as the standard bearer for organizational growth on diversity, equity, and inclusion measures, the Equity Audit is a comprehensive benchmarking tool that assesses diversity, equity, and inclusion for schools, nonprofit organizations, and companies. The tool explores hundreds of indicators that assess the current state of an organization or institution's constituents, community partners, board members, employment, hiring practices and more.



**Awa**  
BY BELOVED

**“We designed Awa to make it easier for large, complex entities - from school districts to multinational companies - to diagnose their diversity, equity, and inclusion needs. Awa is more than a measurement tool. It is an opportunity for leadership teams to deepen their community of practice and design a more equitable future.”**

**-Rhonda Broussard**



## IN GRATITUDE

We are grateful for our funding partners. Thank you for your investment in our vision.



**Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights. You will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in.**

**-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**

