



beloved

COMMUNITY

2019 Impact Report





We are Beloved.

We are living in a country that is increasingly diverse and yet persistently segregated. People of color will make up more than half of the U.S. population by 2045; still, more than half of U.S. students attend school in racially concentrated districts, where over 75 percent of pupils are either white or children of color. Students in a socioeconomically and racially diverse schools have stronger academic outcomes, lower drop-out rates, and higher college enrollment rates than students in schools with concentrated poverty. Likewise, families moving from high poverty neighborhoods to mixed-income neighborhoods experience both psychological benefits and better economic results later in life. Conversely, segregation in housing and schools support persistent racial disparities over the course of a lifetime, impacting employment, income, health outcomes, and life expectancy.

At Beloved Community, we believe in the power of intentionally integrated communities. We seek to increase opportunities for youth to attend diverse, equitable schools. We strive to increase opportunities for families to live in diverse, equitable communities. We endeavor to strengthen individual and systemic responses to implicit bias. We work to deepen regional commitments to inclusive leadership across all sectors. These are critical steps to achieving a racially equitable society.

Our goal is to create a beloved community and this will require a qualitative change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives.

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This vision is ambitious and yet absolutely critical to fulfill the promises of this nation. To achieve this vision, Beloved Community catalyzes people and institutions to implement sustainable cross-sector diversity and equity practices that result in economic equity for their regions. We build regional coalitions committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion across education, housing, and workplaces. We provide leaders and communities the toolkits and training needed to pursue just, beloved communities.





Our Strategy

At Beloved Community, we leverage three key strategies to support regions in a quest for racial equity:

- 1. We are building a national, multi-sector coalition of leaders who can demonstrate the business case for diversity.** We coach business leaders on creating sustainable diversity practices. We create entry-level supports for businesses putting DEI practices in place for the first time. We amplify successes and serve as a thought leader in advising key industries or regions on the economic benefits of equity. We advise corporate foundations on how to wisely invest funds towards achieving equity.
- 2. We partner with regional coalitions of individuals and organizations to build the capacity for moving from diversity to inclusion to equity.** We create and codify tools for organizations to benchmark and measure their progress towards DEI goals. We create trainings for organizations to build knowledge and skill in building equitable schools, workplaces, and communities. We elevate community voice to drive sustainable change. We support their efforts to deepen capacity to serve diverse populations, develop diverse talent pipelines, and support diverse leadership.
- 3. We advocate for policies that support diverse schools and neighborhoods.** As we continue to build Beloved Community's programming, we will ultimately add a research and advocacy team. These individuals will research and analyze existing laws, incentives, and allocations in education and housing. We will build campaigns to amend laws and policies to incentivize diverse and equitable practices. We will support community members in leading the charge on these regional efforts, resulting in more racially and socio-economically diverse schools and neighborhoods.

We need to be weapons of mass construction, weapons of mass love. It's not enough to change the system, we need to change ourselves.

-Assata Shakur





Ultimately, utilizing a combination of the Equity Audit and the Equity Lens Map positions organizations to set performance metrics and targets for an institution's diversity, equity and inclusion aspirations across operations, programming and culture for all stakeholder groups.



Beloved Community frames metrics for diversity, equity and inclusion as follows:

1. Diversity: To what extent does our population reflect our regional demographics?
2. Equity: To what extent are the outcomes from program predictable by participants' demographics?
3. Inclusion: To what extent do our diverse populations feel comfortable, respected, and empowered within our organization? To what extent are diverse community perspectives included in decision-making that impacts their lives?

Under each of these metrics, there are a number of substandards that institutions should consider in meeting their topline targets. The sidebar shows examples of questions aligned to substandards where various types of organizations may consider setting metrics and targets.



Sample Equity Audit Questions

Diversity indicators for vendors may include:

- Do the subcontractors and vendors who are aware of your bid and RFP opportunities reflect your community demographics?
- Do the subcontractors and vendors who submit proposals for open bids and RFPs reflect your community demographics?
- Do the subcontractors and vendors who you select reflect your community demographics?
- Do the subcontractors and vendors who complete your projects represent community demographics?
- Do the subcontractors and vendors who you select demonstrate acumen and/or consistent positive experiences in community engagement with target communities?

Equity indicators for grantees may include:

- Does a representative sampling of grantees analyze their performance on an equity and inclusion audit?
- Does the foundation leadership define equitable practices in financial investment for grantees led by executives from marginalized demographic groups?
- Do grantee renewal rates and multi-year commitments represent regional demographics?
- Are grantee award amounts equally distributed across demographics of nonprofit leaders? (i.e. People of Color-led nonprofits are not funded at substantially lower levels than white-led nonprofits.)
- Are grantee awards and investments predictable by the organizational model? (i.e. National or global nonprofits who operate locally receive higher investments than locally-led nonprofits.)

In a workplace context, inclusion indicators could include:

- Is our internal and external language inclusive of the communities we serve?
- Do staff members and stakeholders from various backgrounds feel that they have equal voice and shared power in decision-making processes?
- Do staff members and stakeholders from various backgrounds feel a sense of belonging in our workplace?
- Are our programs and services culturally relevant to the stakeholders that we serve? Who decides?



Our Impact: Equity in Schools

For many children, the majority of their socialization happens at school. This is where they learn to interact with their peers and build their first non-familial relationships. Unfortunately, the majority of this nation's children attend schools in homogeneous environments, where most of their classmates share their racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. This hinders our children's ability to build a diverse worldview and can potentially reinforce race and class stereotypes gleaned at home, via the media, or in homogeneous communities.

In addition, there is a plethora of evidence that our current education system is failing students of color. Most school curricula is white-normative, centered on white literature and culture and often white-washing history. Standardized tests are notoriously biased, written by white educators without consideration of the disparate lived experiences of children from different racial, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. And while students of color comprise 51% of public school students nationwide, a mere 20% of public school teachers are non-white. Further, there is evidence that white teachers are not properly trained to curb their own bias against students of color; black students are significantly more likely to be suspended, expelled or arrested than their white counterparts. In fact, while black students make up only 15% of public school students, they represent 31% of school-based arrests.



In fact, while black students make up only 15% of public school students, they represent 31% of school-based arrests.

In addition to righting the current inequities facing students of color, creating more even pathways to college, career, and earning-potential, we also have an opportunity to raise a generation of children who see diversity and inclusion as the norm. These children can blossom into leaders who push back against inequity in their communities and workplaces as they enter adulthood, serving as agents of change across the country.

The Beloved Approach

We understand that every school is at a different point on the DEI continuum-- some are brand new to the concept, some have engaged in basic training, and others are proficient in the basics and ready to build towards full implementation. We partner with schools to design a customized, multi-phase partnership that includes elements such as data gathering/analysis, goal setting, train-the-trainer modules, coaching, and/or HR support. We aim to not only build individual champions for the work amongst school leadership, teachers, staff, and parents, but to create a culture that fully embraces equitable practices and outcomes so that the commitment to equity last beyond any individual charismatic leader or funding stream.

“Rhonda and Nicole are very thoughtful, listen well, are judgement free, and are extremely clear about where we can push to be better.” -Soraya Verjee, Chief Talent Officer, Collegiate Academies

K-12 Clients Served

Audubon Schools
Collegiate Academies
Diverse Charter Schools Coalition
Libertas College Prep
New Schools for New Orleans
Ripple Effects

Samuel J. Green Charter School
Strategic Design Solutions
Trauma Informed Schools Learning Collaborative
The Mind Trust
The Papyrus Group



Our Impact: Equity at Work

In both the for-profit and non-profit sectors, white cultural norms pervade our workplaces. This can create uncomfortable working conditions for people of color, preventing them from fully engaging at the office. Additionally, for companies/organizations that serve diverse constituencies, a lack of inclusive practices in the workplace can lead to misguided decisions, faulty programs and products, and a disconnect with clients.

The bulk of Beloved Community's work in our first two years of operation has been in the non-profit sector. Since non-profit organizations are more likely than for-profit organizations to specifically target marginalized communities for programs and services, the sector has been more quick to recognize the importance of ensuring equitable program recruitment, retention, and outcomes amongst clients from various backgrounds. Nonprofit organizations are also perhaps more likely to boast a diverse staff, with many opportunities to build equitable HR practices, decision-making processes, and other workplace practices.



At Beloved Community, we believe that the goal of the nonprofit sector should be to build a more equitable society. We strive to partner with organizations to make that goal explicit and build both the internal and external practices to contribute to a more just society.

Case Study: Urban Arts Commission

The UrbanArt Commission (UAC) in Memphis conducted a series of public listening sessions and small focus groups in 2017, leading to a recognition that their commitment to equity required more than one goal within a strategic plan, but rather active demonstration of that commitment through intentional practices and accountability mechanisms. With this in mind, UAC turned to Beloved Community to partner on the creation of their 2018-2023 strategic plan. Beloved Community built on UAC's initial findings through conducting interviews with board, staff and other stakeholders. Beloved also referred UAC to another trusted partner, NCCJ St. Louis, to facilitate anti-bias training with UAC's board and staff to create shared language and understanding before digging into strategic planning sessions.

Throughout the process, UAC ended up rewriting their mission statement and developing a brand new vision statement and core values centered on equity. "Beloved Community supported us in charting some really bold shifts in our work," said UAC Executive Director Lauren Kennedy. "They were completely responsive to our needs." The community has responded very positively to UAC's new direction, and Beloved has continued to support the roll-out process by helping individual staff members operationalize the plan in their day-to-day work.

Kennedy says that Beloved Community brought tremendous value to the project through both a deep understanding of the Memphis community as well as a perspective as an "outside instigator." "We didn't want someone who was going to think about how to be more innovative in the confines what Memphis already is. We needed an outside voice to help us press forward for a new vision," said Kennedy.

UAC Strategic Plan Highlights

Vision: UAC aspires for art to be integral to a thriving and equitable Memphis. For this to be true:

- Artists must be supported in advancing their careers and recognized as creative problem solvers.
- People most directly impacted by arts programming must be involved in identifying the goals and structure of those programs.

Mission: UAC creates opportunities for artists and neighborhoods to connect and shape spaces through public art.

Goal #1: An increasing number of Memphis-based artists have the capacity to participate in public art.

Goal #2: UAC will increase visibility and connections to public art in neighborhoods across the city through sustained reciprocal relationships.

Goal #3: The scope of public art produced by UAC across the city will expand.



Our Impact: Communities of Practice

In addition to providing individualized support for schools and workplaces, Beloved Community also offers cohort-based institutional support through our Communities of Practice program. In our cohort model, organizational teams gain individualized insights to their institutional practices while also learning from and with peer organizations striving to make similar changes. Through this model, teams gain a community of trusted partners who can provide feedback and insights from their own journeys towards creating equitable institutions.

The Communities of Practice program is highly customizable to the needs of various regions and industries seeking to engage in this work. However, cohorts typically meet over 6-8 months, receiving over 20 hours of group training. Sessions offer a mix of instruction, interactive activities, group discussion, and time for organizational teams to develop their institutional equity plans. In addition, each organizational team receives coaching from Beloved Community experts to support their individual leadership needs and change management for their organization. Core content includes:

- Understanding key concepts of identity, intersectionality, bias, power, privilege and belongingness
- Engaging with the Equity Audit tool to understand organizational baselines
- Utilizing personal and professional frameworks for consistent, ongoing racial equity work
- Centering community engagement
- Debiasing talent/human resources practices
- Interrogating neutrality in organizational policies and practices
- Developing organizational practices that center people
- Embedding data into equity-centered goals and objectives
- Managing change with key stakeholder groups

By the end of the program, teams of cohort participants should meet the following objectives:

- Identify the equity values underscoring their organization's vision
- Understand their organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion strengths and areas for growth
- Develop an Equity Work Plan to strategically address diversity, equity, and inclusion needs.

The cohort-based approach benefits individuals and organizations by providing a built-in support system as they return to their institutions to implement their work plans. However, the greater benefit is to the broader community. Communities of Practice allow regions to accelerate their progress towards system-wide equitable practices. For example, in just a few years, a region could see a majority of its schools participate in a Community of Practice, creating shared vision and language for equity in schools. This would fundamentally change the way that children are educated across an entire region, laying a foundation for key generational change.

Nonprofit Clients Served

Be NOLA
Bike Works
Camelback Ventures
City Fund
Crescent City Corps
EdNavigator
EngageDEI
Greater New Orleans
Funders Network
LITE Memphis
Momentum Nonprofit
Partners
Oak Foundation
Relay Graduate School for
Education
United Way - SELA
Urban Art Commission





Case Study: FirstLine Schools

Through Beloved Community’s “diverse-by-design” support one of FirstLine’s schools, Samuel J. Green, FirstLine became one of the first CMOs in the country to participate in Beloved’s Equity Audit. After receiving their results, FirstLine discovered that Beloved’s analysis showed clear alignment with internal conversations on a desire and need to better weave values of equity and inclusion throughout the organization’s culture. So, when Beloved announced the first Equity at Work cohort in New Orleans this year, FirstLine knew that it was a timely opportunity to engage.

Through the Equity at Work cohort, the FirstLine central office team had an opportunity to both validate some of their successful school-level DEI processes and procedures while also determining the need to implement significant changes to their talent management and adult culture practices. FirstLine’s Board had previously set an annual goal of 80% retention for lead teachers, but, like at many other schools, teacher turnover was difficult to curb. FirstLine had previously tried approaching this problem through multiple lenses-- but they had yet to examine it through a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Through participation in the Equity at Work cohort, FirstLine began a different assessment of the problem: What is the quality of relationships between teachers and their managers? Are the quality of these relationships impacted across lines of race? Are there perceptions of inequity in promotion practices? Do our staff feel a sense of belonging at FirstLine? Why or why not?



The Equity Audit and cohort work helped the FirstLine team to recognize that a portion of their HR policies and adult culture has been left up to manager personality-- a practice that needed to change for the sake of equity. FirstLine’s team developed a one-year action plan focused on immediate changes to recruitment, hiring, and retention protocols that would better align organizational policy and practice. “Partnering with Beloved Community gave us a vocabulary to pinpoint our challenges and to build a shared language amongst our team,” said Rebekah Cain, Executive Director of Operations. This shared lexicon provided the foundation to approach staff culture in a more clear and intentional way.



FirstLine’s team reflected that they appreciated the structure of the cohort that focused on actually creating a plan for implementation. “It’s one thing to participate in a training on DEI or belongingness-- but Beloved Community’s approach is different because it involves creating an actual plan for impact,” said Cain. FirstLine’s team also noted that they deeply benefited from Beloved creating a safe space that cultivated relationships amongst cohort participants based in trust and vulnerability. “Beloved Community guided group conversations in a way that allowed us the space to think more deeply about issues that felt surface-level, but actually weren’t,” said Dr. Allisyn Swift, Lead Network Psychologist. “It was great to collaborate with organizations from across the city who are committed to the same values.”

FirstLine is hopeful that they will be able to continue working with their cohort and Beloved Community in the future. “Our hope is that we really start to pay more attention to adult culture across the board. We rightfully focus a lot on student culture-- but if the adult systems aren’t healthy, the kids won’t be healthy either,” said Swift. “We hope to ultimately expand the adult culture work to parents and community members as well.”

Communities of Practice Clients Served

ALL Memphis
Arts Memphis
BLDG Memphis
Center for Transforming Communities
Community Foundation of Greater Memphis
FirstLine Schools

Innovate Memphis
Live Oak Wilderness Camp
Louisiana Public Health Institute
Momentum Nonprofit Partners
Orpheum Theatre
Propeller



Our Impact: Thought Leadership

At Beloved Community, we know that not all organizations, schools, and companies have built the foundations necessary to engage with us on building institutional equity. Some leaders need to do their own work on understanding power, privilege and oppression. Some institutions need to engage their teams in introductory-level DEI training. Still others have to do the most basic of work-- understanding why diversity, equity, and inclusion matter and naming them as priorities.

Beloved Community strives to serve as a thought leader in this space. Our founder, Rhonda Broussard, is a respected regional and national leader in diversity and education initiatives. Rhonda travels the country speaking to audiences on topics ranging from the business case for diversity and inclusion, shifting blame from individuals to racist systems and structures, and her vision for building beloved communities. Rhonda's personal experiences and deep academic knowledge weave together compelling narratives that push regional leaders to rethink their priorities.

Rhonda has spoken to over a dozen convenings in Beloved Community's early years, including engagements hosted by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the National Bar Association, UCLA, Tulane University, the Collective Impact Forum, Diverse Charter Schools Coalition, the Deeper Learning Convening, MidSouth Nonprofit Conference, PolyPrep Country Day School, RIDES Institute at Harvard Graduate School of Education, Louisiana Language Access Coalition Conference, and La Voz.

In the latter half of 2019, Beloved Community will present at additional conferences around the US, including: Grantmakers for Education, South Eastern Conference on Funding, UpSwell, St. Louis Racial Equity Summit, iNACOL, Association of California Superintendents, TN Charter Schools Conference, and the Dual Language Immersion Conference, Roger Williams University.

“Rhonda has served as a school leader and is community-oriented in a way that lends unique expertise when dealing with these issues. She understands how these things can play out and how to communicate them so they stick from the ground level.”

-Patrick H. Jones II, Sr. Director of School Incubation, The Mind Trust

About Rhonda

Rhonda Broussard founded Beloved Community to create sustainable paths to regional economic equity. Her vision for Beloved Community is informed by her education leadership and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's goal “ to create a beloved community and this will require a qualitative change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives.” Over her 25-year career, Rhonda founded and led a charter management organization, was a National Board Certified Teacher and has worked in district and charter schools in drop-out recovery, college access, working class, immigrant, and affluent school communities.

As a recipient of the Eisenhower Fellowship for International Leadership, Rhonda studied in Finland and New Zealand. She focused on minority language education policies, whole system education reform, and teacher education. Rhonda has conducted research in metropolitan France, Cameroun, and Martinique. Rhonda is a Pahara-Aspen Fellow. Rhonda holds a BA in French and Secondary Education from Washington University in St. Louis and an MA in French Studies from The Institute of French Studies at NYU.





Future Impact

Beloved Community's vision for a more equitable society is just beginning to dawn. Our first two years have allowed us to refine our tools, programming, and model while building key partnerships and relationships in cities around the United States. As we head into our third year, bolstered by a growing staff and many new inquiries from key regions, we're projecting rapidly increasing impact in the years ahead:

- **Equity at Work-Hospitality:** Beloved Community will launch a community of practice in New Orleans aimed at the region's biggest employer by sector: hospitality. The cohort will examine what it would look like for hospitality and restaurant groups in New Orleans to make significant shifts in their practices to support economic equity, inclusion and sustainable work for their employees.
- **Equity at Home:** In the third pillar of our model, Beloved Community will partner with community development organizations, housing developers, and local governments to create intentionally integrated communities. Integrated neighborhoods provide residents with better connections to jobs, schools and civic resources, enhancing access to economic opportunity for both individuals and communities. Diverse neighborhoods also boast high levels of civic cohesion, attracting more residents and businesses. In addition, integrated neighborhoods are a key stepping stone for integrated schools, since many children attend a school assigned to them by residency.
- **Research Agenda:** Beloved Community has recently received funding for our first three-year research study to validate our Equity Audit tool and establish the impact of this tool on organizational change processes for sustainable diversity, equity, and inclusion in schools. Moreover, this study will attempt to understand the qualitative impact of the tool on school culture. The results of this study will inform policy platforms to define specific outcomes for inclusion and equity in diverse-by-design schools.
- **Policy Advocacy:** We know that the work of our clients will be hindered by outdated laws and policies designed to keep inequitable and unjust systems and structures in place. Our policy team will serve as experts on outdated housing covenants, school integration laws, and non-discrimination policies to ensure that our clients are equipped to advocate for changes to key laws and policies. We will partner with our clients to catalyze community-driven campaigns and stand alongside community members leading these efforts.
- **Three Beloved Communities:** By 2022, we will serve at least three Beloved Community regions. These regions will have assembled cohorts of schools, neighborhoods and workplaces who are both committed to building their own equitable practices, but also advocating for their peers to do the same. Local governments will commit to region-wide equity indicators. The communities will be working in lockstep towards a vision of equity for all residents.





Opportunity for Investment

We welcome you to join Beloved Community in our mission to catalyze people and institutions to implement sustainable cross-sector diversity practices that result in economic growth for their regions. Here are a few entry points to our work:

Do you lead a school, non-profit organization, or company?

- **Take our equity audit.** Join over 100 institutions in 19 states who have benefited from beginning with an understanding of organizational baselines before embarking on this work as a team. The Equity Audit is available online at wearebeloved.org/equity-audit.
- **Start a conversation.** Our team would love to learn about your goals and how we can help you achieve them, engaging your many stakeholders along the way. Send us a note at info@wearebeloved.org.

Do you manage charitable giving for a foundation or corporation?

- **Be a steward of equity within your portfolio.** Do you incentivize your grantees for pursuing equitable outputs and outcomes? Do you provide training and support to grantees who are striving to achieve equity within their programs? Beloved Community can help! We are available to partner with you to reframe your giving goals and position yourself as a leader for equity. We are also available to offer programs and services to cohorts of your grantees. Want your region to be a beloved community? Reach out today to lesley@wearebeloved.org.
- **Support Beloved Community.** An investment in Beloved Community is an investment in equity. Every day, Beloved Community receives inquiries about taking on new projects in regions across the country. We need to significantly grow our team in order to accommodate these requests. Can you help us scale our efforts? Contact us at rhonda@wearebeloved.org.

Do you want to broaden or deepen a community of practice in your region?

- **Invite us to speak.** Rhonda and other Beloved Community staff members are available to present at conferences, convenings, annual meetings, and other community gatherings. Want to make a convincing business case for the pursuit of equity? We can help. Send your invitations to info@wearebeloved.org.
- **Convene a community of practice.** Can you organize 4-6 similar organizations/schools/workplaces in pursuit of similar DEI goals? We would love to help plan and facilitate a cohort who can learn together and support each other. Tell us more about your idea at lesley@wearebeloved.org.





1700 S. Rampart Street, New Orleans, LA, 70113
info@wearebeloved.org  BelovedCommunityUS  @Beloved_US