

About Our Anti-Racism Work

Starting in 2016, members of The Maria L. Baldwin Community Center recommitted to the organization's long and winding journey of addressing institutional and structural racism. Inspired by informal conversations and common goals, a working group was formed to steward our internal team's reflection on MLBCC's impact on and engagement with our community.

Where we've been...

2017

- Grant received from Community Health Network Area 17 to attend learning community workshops
- Anti-Racism Stewards set initial goals, establish communication agreements, begin to collect resources and create a tool of key terms to facilitate discussions with staff

2018

- Anti-Racism Stewards begin holding spaces for all staff, program leaders, and administrators to discuss personal reactions to key terms

2019

- Leadership staff begin to attend trainings and workshops centered on racial equity
- Teachers lead an effort to update afterschool library
- Board of Directors invited to join in antiracism work
- Staff begin conversations around sustainability and self- and community-care, share resources for further learning
- Children's Programs Site Directors lead conversations around race and equity in out-of-school time (OST) settings

2020

- Community member introduces proposal to change neighborhood name due to Agassiz's theories on polygenism and their roots in white supremacy
- COVID-19 pandemic forces organization to go into emergency operations, operating food pantry delivery service and taking on case work to support hardest hit community members and address issues of access to essential services and resources
- Board of Directors vote to begin efforts to change the agency name

2021

- Agency staff hold space for neighborhood council, local residents and local government to address neighborhood name change
- Children's Programs begin new framework to deliver essential childcare programming

2022

- Curriculum planning for staff
- Afterschool social justice curriculum elevates youth voices
- Agency hires consultants to facilitate listening sessions among smaller communities within the organization's staff, including members of the board

2023

- Work is done to identify and support points of growth and learning opportunities for staff and community
- Community-wide announcement celebrating organization name change and new leadership model
- Consultants report on assessment findings and offer learning opportunities
- Organization hosts first Black, Indigenous, Person of Color (BIPOC) staff affinity space

2024

- Consultants offer range of services to staff, ranging from trainings to facilitated conversations
- Anti-Racism Stewards and MLBCC staff engage in deep internal work and reflection in all areas of community center programming and organizational identity work

2025

- Anti-Racism Stewards and MLBCC staff begin to engage in dialogues with wider community
- MLBCC staff and board members meet to review organization's mission statement; new mission statement and values are established March 2025, defining one of our values as "fostering an equitable environment where everyone feels valued, by adopting intersectional anti-racist practices in all that we do".
- Members of Anti-Racism Stewards collaborate with Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition to support greater sustainability related to BIPOC staff support efforts

2026 and Where We're Going...

- Anti-Racism Stewards welcome new MLBCC members, increasing capacity for future facilitated conversations and dialogues
- BIPOC MLBCC staff attend Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition-hosted gathering with an eye toward continued cross-org collaboration for restorative work
- Ongoing learning and dialogue opportunities for our staff
- Sustaining Equity and Access Scholarship Awards for program participants
- Learning and adopting restorative practices within our community, uplifting joy, resilience, and belonging