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Racial Justice and Equity Giving Guide

ROSE COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Cultivating a thriving region strengthened by its diversity and philanthropy

Recent national tragedies have brought long-overdue attention to historic and structural racism within our country and communities.

The subsequent dialogue has created actionable opportunities to advance racial equity and justice, and the Metro Denver region is home to strong leaders and community organizations that have been working in these areas for years.

This guide includes information about organizations Rose Community Foundation has supported that are addressing systemic inequities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities with a particular focus on uplifting the Black community in Greater Denver. Their leaders are proximate to the issues they seek to address, are part of the communities they serve and are visionaries who are driven to create change.

Because the impacts of systemic racism and bias are so pervasive, Rose Community Foundation's partners include organizations working at the intersection of racial equity, justice and a wide range of issue areas, spanning education, housing, transportation, economic opportunity, criminal justice, environment, community safety, arts and culture, youth empowerment, civic engagement and more. For additional details about the nonprofits and their approaches, please visit their individual websites (links provided below) or reach out to our [Philanthropic Services team](#). We hope you will join us in supporting the important work of these organizations.

◆ be well Health and Wellness Initiative via the Foundation for Sustainable Urban Communities

be well, the health and wellness initiative of [The Foundation for Sustainable Urban Communities](#), aims to create health equity and access for people living in the Northeast Park Hill, Greater Park Hill, East Montclair, Montbello, Central Park and Northwest Aurora neighborhoods. Its work is guided by the be well Community Collaborative, a multisector partnership driven by residents and led by block captains, resident organizers that engage the community and support the creation of their policy agendas. Rose Community Foundation invested in this work to support the organizing and health advocacy efforts of community members and create capacity for resident organizers to grow into leadership.

◆ Black Business Initiative (BBI) via Trailhead Institute

[BBI](#) works with Black-owned businesses with the goal of increasing economic equity. BBI is striving to close the racial wealth gap by supporting businesses with programs that address economic disparities through acumen, training and mentorship programs, as well as pathways to increase access to capital, increase patronage of Black-owned businesses and advance equitable policies. BBI's trainings, consulting and digital services are offered to business owners at low or no cost. BBI believes that successful businesses are direct pathways to wealth, teach essential financial skills, decrease the unemployment rate – which directly impacts crime rates – and circulate money within the Black community. Rose Community Foundation invested in BBI because their programming expands economic growth and mobility.

◆ Black Child Development Institute (BCDI) - Denver

The [Denver chapter of BCDI](#) improves and advances the quality of life for Black children and families through education and advocacy. BCDI's programs focus on early care and education, health and wellness, family engagement, early literacy and public policy and advocacy. BCDI's goals include developing strong early literacy skills and closing inequitable gaps across subgroups for reading deficiencies; engaging children in healthy eating and physical activity; assessing public policies that impact Black families; and engaging caregivers in culturally relevant programming that builds their capacity as advocates for their families. Investing in BCDI ensures there is a powerful and effective policy voice related to the education, care and health of Black children in Greater Denver.

◆ Brother Jeff's Cultural Center

Located in the Five Points district of Denver, [Brother Jeff's Cultural Center](#) fosters strength in the Black community through health, economic, advocacy and arts initiatives. Its racial justice development and training programs includes mentoring, workshops, cultural sensitivity and team-building protocols. The Center has a no-questions asked food pantry and free hot food community program, and HIV and AIDS prevention and community advocacy is another cornerstone of its work. It is also a hub for Black community celebrations and has robust social justice cultural arts programs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Center was a trusted place for vaccinations and linked Black communities to mental health counseling. Investing in the Center supports a valued community resource that provides vital services to residents.

◆ Center for African American Health

CAA Health offers Black individuals culturally responsive resources that support them in overcoming the root causes of health issues. The organization takes a multi-generational approach, providing support and services in the areas of physical and mental wellness, access to food and housing, workforce readiness and youth civic engagement. CAA Health has created a social movement through their BeHeard Mile High community panel, an ongoing input mechanism through which community members have their voices heard on social issues. Rose Community Foundation has invested in the organization because they work to create more equitable health systems while also ensuring Black individuals and families have access to the resources to live healthy lives, a dual approach that is core to the work of addressing racial inequities.

◆ Climate Strong Initiative via Co-Lead International

The Climate Strong Initiative brings together BIPOC community entrepreneurs to create and develop climate-resilient enterprises aimed at mitigating climate change's impacts on their communities. Entrepreneurs participate in a six-month cohort and receive business coaching and leadership support throughout the development of their enterprise idea, learning how to scale their project and finalize their business plan. Supporting this organization will result in sustainable, community-based solutions informed by the lived experiences of individuals experiencing the inequitable impacts of climate change. In addition to addressing climate community resilience, this project creates a sustainable infrastructure that incorporates behavioral change, wellness programming and food security partnerships for the participants. It is a complete ecosystem that leverages the emerging green revolution to re-imagine BIPOC empowerment.

◆ Collaborative Healing Within Communities (CHIC)

CHIC helps families break intergenerational cycles of poverty and violence, strengthening communities by strengthening women and girls. Its programs include social, emotional and cultural wellbeing education for youth, career planning and workforce development services to support women entering the trades, and reentry programming to mentor women and girls exiting the prison and juvenile justice systems. CHIC's work empowers women of color to succeed through culturally relevant, whole-family, female-focused supports centered on the education, workforce and criminal justice systems. Women of color have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, and an investment in CHIC works to address these disparities by building skills that can change lives.

◆ Colorado Black Women for Political Action (CBWPA) via Colorado Black Women Endowment Fund

CBWPA aims to ensure the wellbeing of the local Black community through training and education to eradicate policies and systems that promote racism. The organization pursues three goals: provide a vehicle for meaningful political involvement of Black individuals, create awareness around issues impacting the Black community, and engage Black women living in Colorado in the political process. CBWPA serves as a trusted community resource on candidates, issues and electoral process information; encourages voter turn-out and full-ballot voting; and provides Black history, education and awareness of policy issues. An investment in the organization is an investment in inclusive civic engagement and a stand against the historical disenfranchisement of the Black community.

◆ Colorado People's Alliance (COPA)

COPA is dedicated to advancing social change locally, statewide and nationally. COPA engages members from communities most impacted by injustices through deep relational organizing. Members drive COPA's campaign and policy priorities in the areas of climate, immigrant, economic and racial justice. COPA's work is conducted through a racial justice lens based on the understanding that systemic oppression is the root cause of the issues on which the organization works. Investing in community organizing is particularly impactful given that organizing has historically been one of the most powerful vehicles for communities of color to change narratives, shift unequal power dynamics and generate solutions to structural issues.

◆ Empower Community High School

Empower serves students in Aurora through education that is student-led, educator-guided, and co-created with community in order to be grounded in shared experiences and multiculturalism. Empower offers participatory education that promotes student and family ownership and powers academic programs that meet the needs of both the community and its students. Empower seeks to create an inclusive and safe educational setting for students of color that builds upon the cultural wealth of its neighborhoods. By engaging in meaningful, real-world projects of their own design, students master the core elements of self-determination: relatedness, competence and autonomy. Investing in Empower supports community members, students and families in co-creating project-based learning that is grounded in their experiences.

◆ The Kaleidoscope Project (TKP)

TKP equips hubs of community organizers with opportunities to strengthen their neighborhoods and create economic stability, focusing on food security and the support of minority-owned businesses. TKP offers small-business relief, education, leadership training, technical assistance, community organizing and advocacy. These efforts are amplified by ARevolution, TKP's teen program utilizing podcasts, storytelling, videos and photography. TKP's current goal is to complete a relief program offering stipends to Black-owned businesses who participate in a BIPOC Business Circle focused on accessing wealth-building opportunities and personal development. Investing in TKP supports participatory grassroots efforts of neighborhoods to build on their strengths and partnerships and improve food security and economic stabilization.

◆ Montbello Organizing Committee (MOC)

MOC aims to galvanize Montbello residents and provide them with the necessary tools to develop their leadership skills so that they can proactively address the issues affecting their quality of life. MOC works in pursuit of a vibrant and economically viable Montbello through a community-driven approach. MOC keeps its finger on the pulse of what residents need and want: spearheading an economic development program that includes a grocery-anchored cultural hub; elevating community leadership through training and mentoring; convening a community mental health circle; collaborating with schools, churches and nonprofits to reduce food insecurity; building a walkable trail; and publishing the Montbello Urban Spectrum. Funding MOC supports community-driven, inclusive efforts to find common ground on issues of social justice.

◆ Project VOYCE

Project VOYCE partners with youth to cultivate transformational leadership that addresses the root causes of inequity in communities by training, employing, organizing and building equitable youth-adult partnerships. Project VOYCE's purpose is to provide youth with the skills and knowledge to dismantle barriers embedded in education, employment and housing. Its strategy highlights education and civic engagement as the most critical levers to disrupt social, racial and health inequity. Project VOYCE creates and maintains inclusive spaces for youth to develop their leadership styles while forming lasting bonds with peers and adults. Rose Community Foundation invested in Project VOYCE to support youth-focused curriculum and empowerment.

◆ Reimagine Policing and Public Safety Task Force via Center for Trauma & Resilience

The task force consists of residents, nonprofits, community service providers, government officials and faith leaders collaborating to develop community-led and community-informed safety solutions. The project's goals are to produce a set of best practice, policy, and budget recommendations to the Denver Mayor and City Council for improving community safety in Denver, including expanding successful established programs and creation of new programs based on a gap analysis. The task force is committed to a holistic view of community safety, including supports and solutions for mental health, substance abuse, de-escalation best practices and neighborhood-led safety. Support of this initiative will result in public safety models that are informed by community.

◆ Righteous Rage Institute for Social Justice (RRI) via Breaking Our Chains

RRI aims to create sustainable and thriving communities by building a multiracial, multi-generational movement for abolitionism and healing from racial and social injustice. For over 400 years, intentional policies have been put in place that create radicalized trauma, BIPOC neighborhood destruction, economic disparities and loss of life. RRI understands that transforming these systems must start from a place of individual and communal detoxification from racism and caste-mentality embedded in each of us individually and through our institutions. Its programming includes the One Tribe Freedom School and anti-racist learning journeys for institutions. An investment in RRI is recognition that efforts to transform systems and advance social justice must be grounded in healing, including acknowledging and repairing the harm caused from our history of racial oppression.

◆ Second Chance Center (SCC)

SCC's mission is to help formerly incarcerated people achieve lives of success and fulfillment. Their model is rooted in peer mentoring; many of those providing services and guiding the client have walked the same path. SCC's wraparound services include employment assistance, housing solutions and addiction counseling. SCC provides in-prison release planning, then offers a community where staff and peers are committed to effective and empowering re-integration. The organization works in collaboration with advocacy organizations, legislative bodies and correctional leaders to reshape the legal, attitudinal, and funding landscape for those in re-entry and amplify the voice of those who were formerly incarcerated. Investing in SCC supports their goal of growing their model as a successful laboratory for effective re-entry approaches.

◆ Sistahbiz via Foundation for Black Entrepreneurship

Sistahbiz, a business accelerator within the Foundation for Black Entrepreneurship, supports Black women entrepreneurs in Colorado through culturally responsive capacity and skill building, technical assistance, racial healing, and increased access to capital. Sistahbiz's mission is to close racial and gender equity gaps between Black women entrepreneurs and their white counterparts, both male and female, by creating opportunities for Black women to grow thriving businesses. Its programs include bootcamps, an in-depth cohort program called the Black Girl Therapy Circle, a membership program, access to coaching and trainings as well as a loan fund. Rose Community Foundation invested in Sistahbiz to advance equity by creating opportunities for Black women to access capital and grow thriving businesses.

◆ Soul 2 Soul Sisters

Soul 2 Soul Sisters is a Black women-led, faith-based, racial justice organization that provides programs aimed at combatting racism and ending white supremacy culture and developing healthy communities. Its work includes Black women-centered education and leadership development as well as mental health and wellness initiatives. Since Black women's healthcare is the heart of the organization, S2SS strives to provide a sacred space for Black women to rest, share their experiences and develop and implement plans for individual and collective healing. The organization also supports Black doulas who provide individually tailored, culturally competent care and advocacy for pregnant and postpartum Black women. Its online cohort, Facing Racism, is comprised of mostly white people working together to center Black women and Black experiences and develop systems that provide compassion, abundance and healing. An investment in S2SS centers and supports the movement for Black lives.

◆ Urban Leadership Foundation of Colorado (ULFC)

ULFC's mission is to provide development and advancement opportunities that improve the trajectory of leaders of color committed to positively impacting communities. ULFC's network of individuals is dedicated to advancing the next generation of Black leaders. Through ULF Connect, its flagship program, ULFC provides leadership training that cultivates a pipeline of qualified influencers of color. ULFC strengthens community connections for Black leaders and works across boundaries to improve equity for Black Coloradans. ULFC's Alumni Association provides mentoring and drives the continuation of community service projects started by ULF Connect fellows. ULFC also provides direct services to offset needs in the community caused by COVID-19 and systems that perpetuate systemic and structural racism. Investing in ULF supports a Black leadership pipeline in Denver.

◆ Young Aspiring Americans for Social and Political Activism (YAASPA)

YAASPA provides support to underserved youth to participate in their communities socially and politically, to create awareness of issues directly impacting their communities and to work to affect change. YAASPA sits at the intersection of civic engagement, activism, and education and offers young people of color opportunities to grow their identities, career pathways and civic voice. Its programs allow youth in middle and high school the opportunity to explore academic and career development in the social sciences and social justice while expanding their civic literacy and civic engagement. Rose Community Foundation invested in YAASPA to support the organization's practice of youth participatory action in which youth are positioned as experts of their own experiences.



Reflection and Discussion Prompts

- What surprised me or caught my attention while reading this giving guide?
- How have my assumptions shifted about how change and impact occur?
- How can I be a responsible contributor to dismantling longstanding systemic racism?
- How can I connect my community and my family to the issues and information in this guide?
- How can I invite them to join me on this learning and action journey?

For more information, [contact our team](#).

Donor-advised fundholders who are ready to recommend a grant can give via the [Donor Portal](#).

To support the Foundation's ongoing efforts to advance racial justice in the Greater Denver region, donors can also give to the [Community Action Fund](#) | [Racial Justice](#).

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Cover image courtesy of Kevin Beaty for Denverite

Thank you to Black Business Initiative, Black Child Development Institute and Project VOYCE for the use of their photos