ARE WE READY TO CONFRONT THE NONPROFIT RACIAL LEADERSHIP GAP?

The Boston Foundation Forum
October 18, 2017

Sean Thomas-Breitfeld
Frances Kunreuther
Co-Directors, Building Movement Project
ABOUT THE BUILDING MOVEMENT PROJECT

Leadership

Analyzing how organizations can do their best work by promoting the most effective and inclusive practices

Reports
Race to Lead: Confronting the Nonprofit Racial Leadership Gap

Blog
The Leadership in Leaving

Reports
Vision for Change

Service and Social Change

Developing the capacity of organizations to engage constituents in changing the systems that impact them

Tools
Service and Social Change

Blog
Small Shifts, Big Change

Reports
Crossing Organizational Boundaries to Build New Partnerships

Movement Building

Acknowledging and building on the distinct role of nonprofit organizations in advancing movements for social change

Reports
The Respect ABQ Women Campaign

Blog
Learning How to ACT UP

Blog
Detroitors Reclaiming Voice and Power

Join the Conversation @BldingMovement @bostonfdn #RaceToLead
Why – despite an increased number of training programs for developing leaders of color and the number of groups working on issues of race/race equity – are there not more leaders of color in nonprofits?
Reviewed Academic Literature

Conducted Three Dozen Interviews

Designed Survey
More than 4,300 Respondents Nationwide

176 from MA
WHO TOOK THE SURVEY

Race/Ethnicity

- 58% White
- 42% Person of Color
- 15% African American/Black
- 8% Asian American/Pacific Islander
- 11% Latino/a or Hispanic
- 1% Native American
- 8% Multiracial/POC
PEOPLE OF COLOR ARE QUALIFIED

Person of Color
- High School Diploma/GED: 1%
- Associate’s Degree: 10%
- Bachelor’s Degree (or some graduate courses): 39%
- Master’s Degree: 41%
- PhD, JD, MD, etc.: 9%

White
- High School Diploma/GED: 1%
- Associate’s Degree: 7%
- Bachelor’s Degree (or some graduate courses): 42%
- Master’s Degree: 16%
- PhD, JD, MD, etc.: 44%
Current Role/Position in the Organization

AND EXPERIENCED

- CEO/Senior Management: 48% Person of Color, 53% White
- Middle Manager: 18% Person of Color, 18% White
- Line/Admin Staff: 32% Person of Color, 28% White
Level of Interest in Taking a Top Leadership Role (among Non-CEOs)
WHAT IS THE PROBLEM
Why So Few POC Nonprofit Executives?: Structural Reasons ("Somewhat" or "Strong" Level of Agreement)
Factors that Have Played a Role in Respondents’ Career Advancement
My organization does not support leadership of color. We have a high level of People of Color in our front line staff but the top positions are filled by mainly White men and women... I struggle to be seen as an asset and feel as though my organizations does not actually care about (or is tone deaf to) the real issues affecting my communities ...

-- Multiracial Man
Massachusetts Respondents
MASSACHUSETTS RESPONDENTS BY RACE

- White: 60%
- African American/Black: 23%
- Asian American or Pacific Islander: 7%
- Latino/a or Hispanic: 4%
- Native American: 0%
- Multiracial - POC: 5%
EDUCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Level</th>
<th>Person of Color</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate's Degree or less</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD, JD, MD, etc.</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bar chart showing the percentage of individuals with different educational levels by race.
Who Wants to Lead in Massachusetts

Person of Color:
- Definitely/Probably Yes: 49%
- Definitely/Probably No: 29%
- Maybe: 22%

White:
- Definitely/Probably Yes: 45%
- Definitely/Probably No: 35%
- Maybe: 18%
Massachusetts - It’s the System

- Executive recruiters don’t do enough to find a diverse pool of qualified candidates for top level nonprofit positions. 77% Person of Color, 74% White.

- Predominantly white boards often don’t support the leadership potential of staff of color. 88% Person of Color, 62% White.

- Organizations often rule out candidates of color based on the perceived “fit” of the organization. 74% Person of Color, 50% White.
Race as Factor in Advancement in MA

- Track record at work (Person of Color): 93% Very/Slightly Positive, 7% No Impact
- Track record at work (White): 98% Very/Slightly Positive
- Schooling/Education (Person of Color): 88% Very/Slightly Positive, 9% No Impact
- Schooling/Education (White): 90% Very/Slightly Positive, 6% No Impact, 4% No Impact
- Race/Ethnicity (Person of Color): 55% Very/Slightly Positive, 12% No Impact, 33% No Impact
- Race/Ethnicity (White): 58% Very/Slightly Positive, 37% No Impact, 5% No Impact
Duh!
What did you expect?

Really?
Are you sure?
REAL NEEDS AND SUPPORTS
What Aspiring Leaders Say They Need

- Technical or management skills: 39% (Person of Color), 33% (White)
- Leadership capabilities: 11% (Person of Color), 15% (White)
- Professionally prepared but need opportunity: 10% (Person of Color), 8% (White)
- Ability to lead and supervise staff: 5% (Person of Color), 10% (White)
CHALLENGES AND FRUSTRATIONS

- Demanding workload: 70% Person of Color, 71% White
- Inadequate salaries: 51% Person of Color, 46% White
- Lack of relationship with funding sources: 41% Person of Color, 33% White
- Lack of role models: 39% Person of Color, 27% White
- Lack of social capital/networks: 31% Person of Color, 21% White
- Being called on to represent a community: 36% Person of Color, 14% White
Despite my overwhelmingly positive track record, I've never had a single senior staff person at any of the three nonprofits I've worked for take me under their wing as a mentee and try to groom me for a higher position. And I've never had a supervisor of color.

-- African American Woman
I get pigeon-holed into working for/on behalf of the Latino/immigrant community. Sometimes being Latino is seen as my only "skill."

-- Hispanic / Latinx Man
MASSACHUSETTS RESPONDENTS
WHAT ASPIRING MA LEADERS NEED

- Technical or management skills: 36% Person of Color, 36% White
- Leadership capabilities: 10% Person of Color, 13% White
- Professionally prepared but need opportunity: 5% Person of Color, 6% White
- Ability to lead and supervise staff: 8% Person of Color, 15% White
- Confidence: 0% Person of Color, 6% White
MA CHALLENGES & FRUSTRATIONS

- Demanding workload: 68% (Person of Color), 72% (White)
- Inadequate salaries: 53% (Person of Color), 40% (White)
- Lack of relationship with funding sources: 43% (Person of Color), 37% (White)
- Lack of role models: 37% (Person of Color), 23% (White)
- Lack of social capital/networks: 32% (Person of Color), 21% (White)
- Being called on to represent a community: 40% (Person of Color), 6% (White)
LGBTQ Identity Is a Factor
Impacts of Sexuality on Advancement

Impact of Sexual Orientation on Respondents' Career Advancement
Factors Negatively Impacting Career Advancement of LGBTQ Respondents, by Race (“Very” or “Slightly”)
COMPOUNDING EFFECTS

Challenges and Frustrations Faced on the Job, by Race and Sexuality ("Always" or "Often")

- **LGBTQ People of Color**
  - Being Called on to Represent a Community: 47%
  - Lack of Relationships with Funding Sources: 44%
  - Lack of Role Models: 42%
  - Lack of Social Capital/Networks: 35%

- **Straight People of Color**
  - Being Called on to Represent a Community: 34%
  - Lack of Relationships with Funding Sources: 32%
  - Lack of Role Models: 30%
  - Lack of Social Capital/Networks: 25%

- **LGBTQ White**
  - Being Called on to Represent a Community: 18%
  - Lack of Relationships with Funding Sources: 26%
  - Lack of Role Models: 20%
  - Lack of Social Capital/Networks: 25%

- **Straight White**
  - Being Called on to Represent a Community: 12%
  - Lack of Relationships with Funding Sources: 20%
  - Lack of Role Models: 16%
  - Lack of Social Capital/Networks: 15%
I found a way for myself as an out lesbian by working for organizations with socially charged missions. It has been a bit easier to thrive in those organizations because they have worked to be inclusive of Lesbian Gay and Bisexual folks.

-- Black Lesbian
What Can We Do?
THE ISSUE

RACE TO LEAD
An initiative of Building Movement Project

THE ISSUES

- Nonprofit CEOs don’t reflect the diversity of the U.S.
- 1/3 people of color feel their race/ethnicity has negatively impacted their career.
- 80% of people across race think lack of racial diversity at the top is a problem.
Address Bias and Racism
- Bad experiences can kill aspiration
- Diversity can’t just be added demand to “represent”

Shift the Culture of Current Leaders
- Take leadership in and outside of organizations
- Embrace change (in power)

Measure Change
- Be as rigorous about measuring DEI
- Honor small wins
BMP’s Future Research Agenda

- **CEOs / Executive Directors**
  - Compare POC and white CEOs/EDs (800+ in survey)
  - Understand pathways to leadership

- **Intersection of Gender and Race**
  - Analyze data
  - Explore particular issues of gender bias that surfaced in write-ins and focus groups

- **Deep Dive in Specific Places**
  - Conduct qualitative research in cities / states
  - Prioritize places with majority people of color.

- **Re-Survey in 2019**
  - Collect data 3 years later to measure change and continue to build momentum.
RACE TO LEAD
CONFRONTING THE RACIAL LEADERSHIP GAP

Summary The percentage of people of color in nonprofit executive director roles has remained under 20% for the past decade. To increase the number of people of color leading nonprofits, the sector needs a new narrative about the problem and new strategies to address it. Nonprofits have to transfer the responsibility for the racial leadership gap from those who are targeted by it (aspiring leaders of color), to those governing organizations.

fkunreuther@buildingmovement.org & sthomas-breitfeld@buildingmovement.org