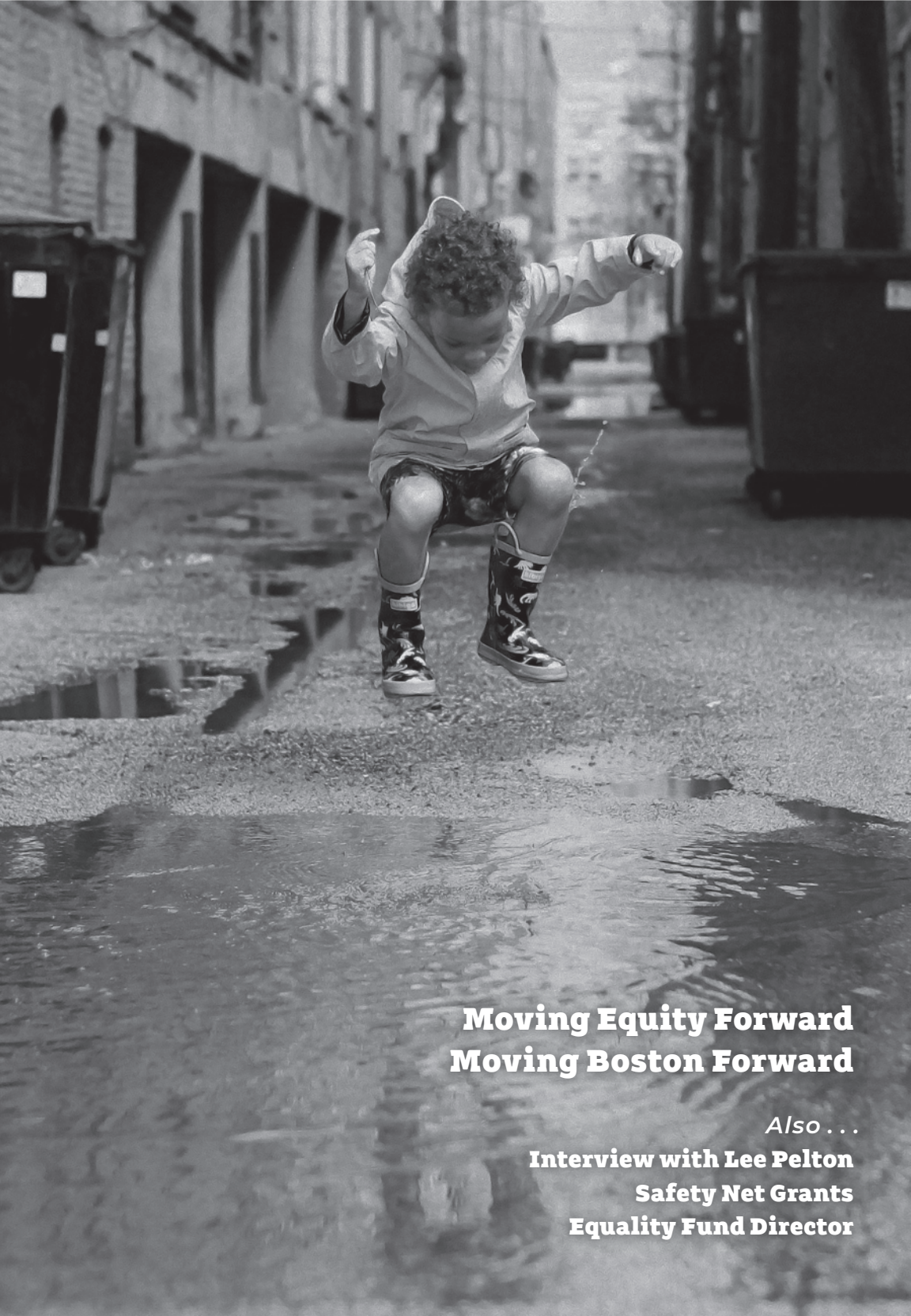


Fall 2023



# NEWS



**Moving Equity Forward  
Moving Boston Forward**

*Also . . .*

**Interview with Lee Pelton  
Safety Net Grants  
Equality Fund Director**

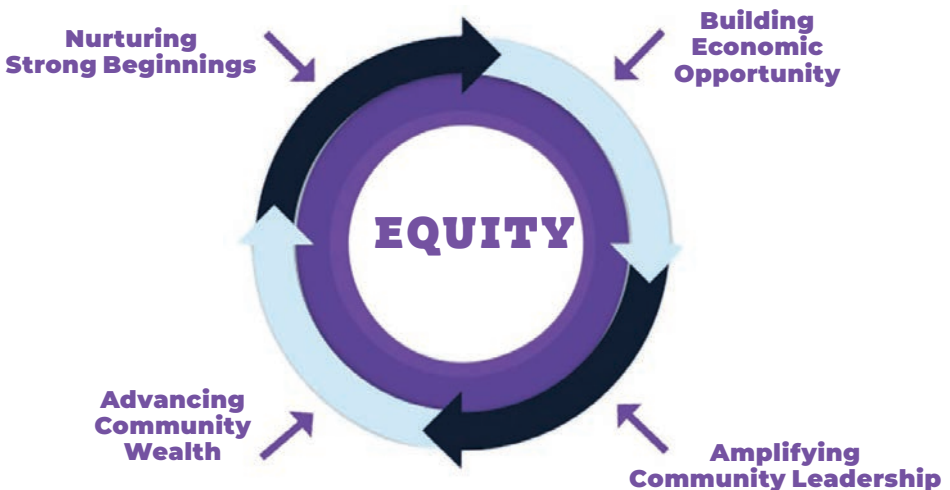
# Behind Our New Brand

**O**n June 22, the Boston Foundation unveiled a new brand that is far more than a redesigned logo and look. Designed in partnership with the Boston-based branding and advertising firm Proverb, the new brand recognizes TBF's strength as an established 108-year-old institution in Greater Boston. It also reflects more than a year of engagement on the part of our board, staff and community partners to develop and refine a comprehensive strategic vision that centers all of our work on building a more equitable future for our city.

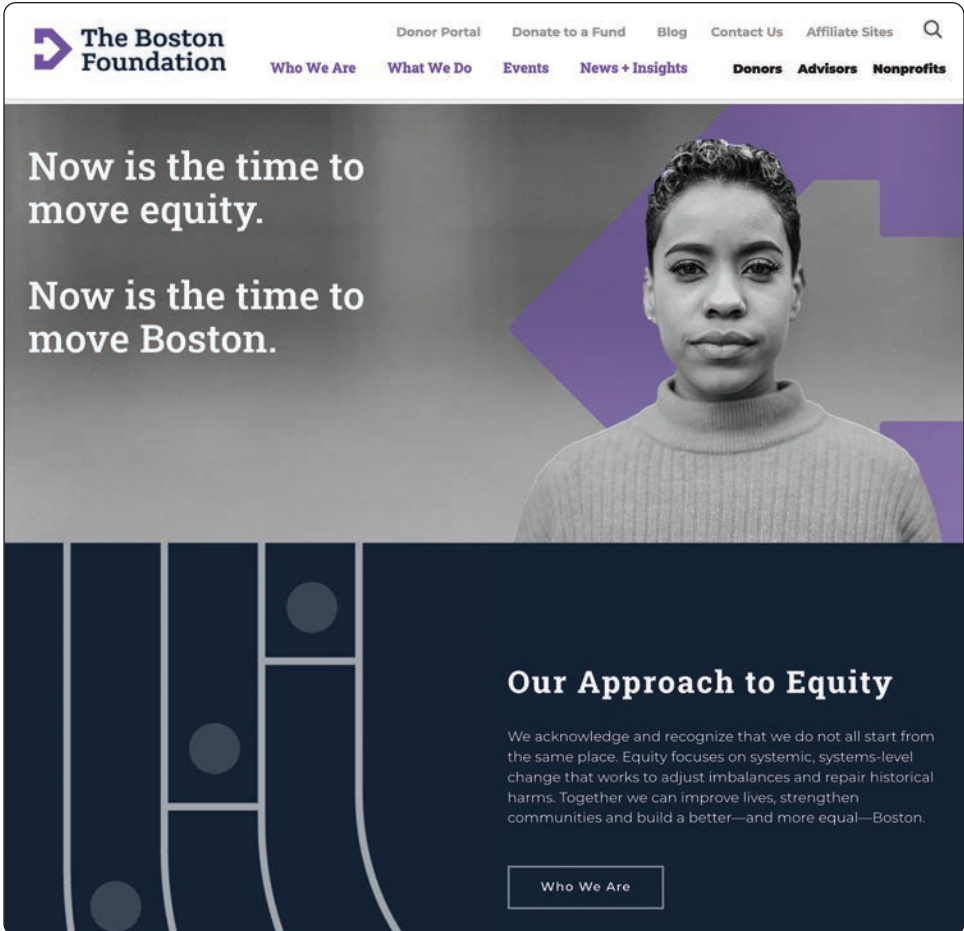
Announcing the new branding, President and CEO Lee Pelton said, "Whether we are working with donors, partnering with the region's brilliant and experienced nonprofit leaders, or connecting with, convening and answering to the communities we serve, this new brand represents our unwavering focus on equity to improve lives and strengthen communities."

In concert with the refreshed visual identity, TBF shared a new structure for all of its work in partnership with nonprofits, donors and community leaders around four pathways. These interconnected pathways unlock greater opportunities to tackle the systemic roots of inequity. Each of the pathways brings together leaders from across the organization to address areas where TBF believes it can most effectively use its resources to move toward equity in Greater Boston.

## Our Interconnected Pathways



# Our four pathways unlock greater opportunities to tackle the systemic roots of inequity.



They also build on work the Foundation implemented most visibly in response to COVID-19, the economic devastation it caused, and the public exposure of the racial disparities that have long plagued our country.

“This new approach recognizes that the most pressing issues we face aren’t limited to single focus areas—they reach across our traditionally defined areas of impact,” said Linda Mason, Chair of the Board of Directors. “TBF’s pathways bring together our best minds in the arts, health, education, housing and workforce development to give us a unique perspective and a calling to connect ideas, resources and partnerships. Only then can we build a city where opportunity meets possibility to achieve equity.”

**The new brand was launched this summer with a redesigned website and video. GO TO: [tbfb.org](https://tbfb.org) to see more.**

# A Conversation with Lee Pelton

On Boston's History and Promise

**“The events from 1974 to 1976 painted Boston nationally as an unwelcoming, racially divided city. We’re working very hard to change that perspective. And it’s not based on what we hope to be. It’s based on what we have become and are becoming.”**



**L**ee Pelton has been President and CEO of the Boston Foundation for a little more than two years now. *TBF News* spoke with him about the conversations he’s been having with the diverse group of people he’s been meeting with throughout our city and region as well as his thoughts about the Supreme Court’s decision on affirmative action. Before joining TBF, Pelton was President of Emerson College for 10 years.

He has been one of the most sought-after local leaders for his thoughts about affirmative action because of his experience in academia and his current role as a civic leader. He spoke at a forum on GBH-TV and was asked by *Globe Magazine* to write an article about the court’s ruling.

***You have been meeting with people throughout our city and region over the last two years. Is there a topic that comes up frequently?***

Most recently, there have been conversations about the evolution of Boston since the busing era, which began on June 22 of 1974 when Judge Garrity ruled that our schools needed to be desegregated, and escalated when the first incidents surrounding busing actually began on September 12. Next year, on the anniversary, I know we will be witness to many conversations and programs regarding what has happened in Boston during those five decades.

We all know this is not the same city that it was a half century ago. It is remarkably diverse—in a way that it was not then—in just about every aspect of community enterprise. We have a female Governor, a female Lt. Governor, a female Attorney General who is African American. We have a female Asian American as our Mayor—and Harvard now has its first African American female President.

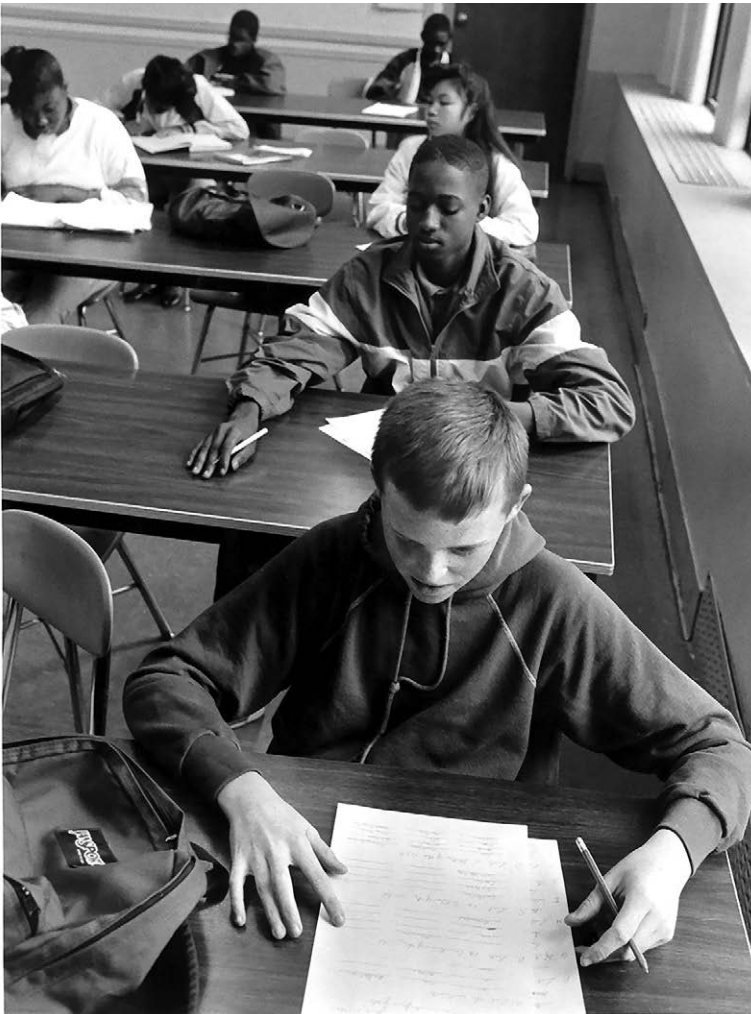
The events in 1974 and the following years marked Boston nationally as an unwelcoming, racially divided city. We're working very hard to change that perspective. And it's not based on what we hope to be. It's based on what we have become and are becoming.

***During a discussion on GBH-TV about the Supreme Court decision on affirmative action, the first thing you said was, "This is a backlash." Could you expand on that?***

Whenever this country has sought to move forward and make good on its promise of equality and civil rights—and extend those rights to folks of color and women and others—there is an inevitable backlash. We saw that vividly in what is now called the “First Reconstruction,” shortly after the Civil War, which then created a horrific backlash that led to upheavals and lynchings and what we now have come to call “Jim Crowism.”

We saw a backlash in the 1960s and 70s with the civil rights movement that Martin Luther King, Jr. brilliantly led. This is often referred to as the “Second Reconstruction.” And we see it in what some people now are calling the “Third Reconstruction,” as people

PHOTO BY RICHARD HOWARD



Next year will mark the 50th anniversary of Judge Garrity's ruling to desegregate the Boston Public Schools through busing.

In 2022,  
Embrace  
Boston held  
our city's first  
free block party  
celebrating the  
Juneteenth  
federal holiday  
in Nubian  
Square.

PHOTO BY O.J. SLAUGHTER



of color and others are on the ascendency. The two motivating factors for the backlashes are the elements that comprise the most toxic forces in human existence, not only in America, but across the globe: fear and ignorance—of which hate is a natural outcome.

It is reflected in outrageous, ungenerous, conspiratorial behaviors that seek to disrupt real progress and an unwillingness to sit down with both sides and have a conversation. In an essential sense, the Supreme Court's decision is another kind of backlash that seeks to turn back the tide of progress. (See page 11 for more from Pelton on affirmative action.)

***When current trends are discouraging, what is your antidote?***

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said that “the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends towards justice.” I believe that. We’ve made a lot of progress in this country, in my view. I remain hopeful. Being engaged in that project of hope for the future is what gets me up in the morning. Every day, I ask myself a simple question: “How will I improve lives and strengthen communities today?” That gives me hope.

# Introducing M. Scott Knox

## Leading the Equality Fund Through This Moment in Time

**T**his spring, M. Scott Knox was named the first Director of the Equality Fund, TBF's endowed fund that supports Greater Boston nonprofits serving and strengthening the LGBTQ+ community. He takes on the role with more than two decades of experience in Boston-area nonprofits, including education-focused organizations such as Steppingstone Foundation and Jumpstart. He joins the Fund at a watershed moment for the LGBTQ+ community—a time when hard-fought-for rights are being reversed by legislatures throughout the country.

“Promise is not progress,” says Knox, “and clearly even the gains we have achieved are not guaranteed. Massachusetts has the honor of being the ‘first’ in many areas, gay marriage being one of them. But we can’t be too complacent, even here, because there are so many people in our community who are struggling. I’m thinking about asylum seekers and homeless youth and those in the trans community.”

Knox sees the fund as “one arrow in the quiver” of TBF’s central goal of advancing equity. “Knowing that what we’re doing is an integral part of TBF’s drive for equity is motivating and inspiring,” he explains.

With more than a decade of work by the Equality Fund, he has a lot to build on: \$1.8 million in grants made over the last 11 years, nearly \$7 million in estate and planned gifts committed, a strong and deeply committed Advisory Committee, and a growing community of supporters.

“As I look to the work ahead, I’m particularly committed to uplifting and investing in the intersectional needs within Boston’s LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities,” says Knox. “The Equality Fund is perfectly positioned to collaborate with the Asian Community Fund and the Latino Equity Fund at TBF, as well as other partners, to bring greater visibility and recognition to the rich diversity of the Greater Boston’s LGBTQ+ communities.”



PHOTO BY CRAIG BAILEY

**“Knowing that what we’re doing is an integral part of TBF’s drive for equity is motivating and inspiring.”**

# Safety Net Grants

COMMUNITY LED. MEETING BASIC NEEDS.



PHOTO BY KRISTINA PAUKSHTITE

**\$1.2 Million**

went to

**24** organizations

**[19** led by  
people of color]

**H**unger. Homelessness. Legal services for immigrants. Transformative programs for incarcerated people and their families. Shelter and crucial services for young people who deserve a safe place to sleep.

This summer, the first round of TBF's Safety Net Grants program was announced after a remarkable process involving two dozen community members who led the final decision process. A total of \$1.2 million went to 24 organizations that respond to the essential needs of marginalized communities and vulnerable residents. All grants were \$50,000 and offer basic operating support.

"As an equity-focused organization, we recognize the power of community voices and lived experiences in every aspect of our work," says Orlando Watkins, Vice President and Chief Program Officer, "including decisions about funding."

In all, 26 community members served on the final review panel, working in partnership with TBF to ensure the final slate represented a diverse portfolio of organizations across Greater Boston. Overall, 79 percent of the groups receiving funding are led by people of color.

**GO TO: [tbf.org](https://tbf.org) to learn more about our Safety Net Grants.**



Line Leonard, a recently arrived Haitian seeking asylum, waited for help at Immigrant Family Services Institute in Mattapan.

## Confronting an Acute Humanitarian Crisis

### The Massachusetts Migrant Families Relief Fund

On August 8, the Boston Foundation and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay announced the formation of the Massachusetts Migrant Families Relief Fund, a partnership between the two organizations to address the acute humanitarian crisis faced by migrants seeking asylum in our state.

“We need all hands on deck to support newly arriving migrant families and address this crisis,” said Governor Maura Healey. “I’m deeply grateful to the Boston Foundation and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay for meeting this moment.”

The new Fund will:

- ▶ Rapidly deploy emergency financial assistance through a trusted network of human services and shelter organizations in the Commonwealth to ensure individuals, children, and families have access to essential needs (temporary accommodations, food, clothing, diapers, hygiene items, and transportation).
- ▶ Support livelihood opportunities and assistance such as health screenings, translation services, legal assistance, work authorizations, ESOL classes, and other socio-economic and cultural integration supports.
- ▶ Provide operating funding to the local community-based organizations providing direct services on already-stretched budgets.

Early gifts to the Fund include major donations from the Eastern Bank Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and John Hancock.

**GO TO: [unitedwaymassbay.org/migrant-relief-fund](https://unitedwaymassbay.org/migrant-relief-fund) to donate.**

# Who We Are

## New Board Members



**T**he Boston Foundation has named four new members of our Board of Directors, including Dimock Center CEO Dr. Charles Anderson, Boston Medical Center Vice President of Community Engagement and External Affairs Petrina Martin Cherry, MassBio CEO and President Kendalle Burlin O'Connell, and Curriculum Associates CEO Rob Waldron.

Board Chair Linda Mason welcomed the new Directors for terms beginning July 1, 2023, while thanking longtime Directors Paul W. Lee and Dr. Myechia Minter-Jordan, both of whom have left the Board after 10 years due to term limits. She also announced that Dwight Poler, Director at TBF since 2018, has been chosen as the Board's Vice Chair.

"As the Boston Foundation enters a new era, driven by our renewed focus on equity, the Board of Directors is thrilled to welcome our quartet of new directors," said Mason. "Charles, Trina, Kendalle and Rob each bring remarkable skills, strengths and perspectives to the Board as leaders of Boston's philanthropic and nonprofit communities. At a time when TBF will be focused on strengthening our partnerships throughout the communities we serve, their expertise will play a critical part in the Board's guidance for years to come."

**GO TO: [tbf.org](https://www.tbf.org) for detailed biographies of all the members of our Board of Directors.**

**From top: Dr. Charles Anderson, Petrina Martin Cherry, Kendalle Burlin O'Connell and Rob Waldron**

# From Our President and CEO M. Lee Pelton

The United States Supreme Court's majority in June tied itself in knots in order to construct a ruling that race-conscious admission programs at two elite universities were unconstitutional and therefore unlawful.

It was a tortured exercise in magical thinking, untethered from the reality of America as it is and will continue to be—a pluralistic and multidimensional country that grows more diverse each year. And it was based, in large part, on a counterfactual presumption that we live in a colorblind society, despite a plethora of evidence to the contrary.

At the Boston Foundation, we will redouble our commitment to our principal goal of advancing equity for all. We remain committed to closing the gaps caused by our region's greatest disparities. But to do so we must be honest about their very existence and the historical legacies that led to their creation. As Greater Boston's community foundation, we will continue to reflect and support the rich diversity of our city and region, promote policies and practices that tackle the individual, systemic and root-level causes of inequity, and be a bold voice to unapologetically face challenging issues. This is our promise.

*(Excerpted from an essay on our website titled, "The Magic Kingdom: How the Supreme Court got it wrong in its landmark affirmative action ruling.")*

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Dr. Charles Anderson  
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Petrina Martin Cherry  
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Pam Eddinger  
Betty Francisco  
Linda A. Mason, *Chair*  
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Kendalle Burlin O'Connell  
Ronald P. O'Hanley  
Tracy Palandjian  
M. Lee Pelton, *ex officio*  
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Rob Waldron  
C.A. Webb

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Orlando C. Watkins  
*Vice President and Chief Program Officer*  
George Wilson  
*Chief Investment Officer*

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...to  
move  
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forward.

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