



Together,
WE PROSPER

10-Year Strategic Vision



Letter from our PRESIDENT & CEO

In 2021, the Greater Washington Community Foundation embarked on a learning journey to develop a new strategic vision. Our vision to **close our region's racial wealth gap** imagines a region that is equitable, just, and thriving. Not just one that is simply recovering, but a region where we all prosper, together. During this process, our Trustees — led by Sean Morris and Artis Hampshire-Cowan — along with our local Advisory Boards, fundholders, and staff, journeyed together to chart a path for our collective future. After benchmarking ourselves against other community foundations around the country, asking fundholders, professional advisors, and partners about their aspirations for us and our region, we landed on seven core goals for our 10-year strategic framework.



Community Leadership

To Lead in the Community and invest in strategies that close the racial wealth gap and increase economic mobility.



Racial Equity & Inclusion

The Community Foundation commits to leading with racial equity and inclusion in every aspect of our work.



Asset Growth & Sustainability

Double the assets of the foundation in order to respond to the scope of our challenges and opportunities, at scale.



Operational Excellence

We will work to maximize operational efficiency and offer excellent customer service.



Board Leadership & Governance

The Board of Trustees will offer exceptional governance and leadership to support the success of the plan.



Strategic Communications

We will powerfully communicate our work and the opportunity to create a more just and equitable Greater Washington Region.



Regional Presence

The Community Foundation is fully aligned as a united organization serving the entire region, yet recognizing the unique needs and nuances of jurisdictions and neighborhoods

Our vision for a just, equitable, and thriving community is one where we all prosper, thrive, and flourish. We envision neighborhoods with historically limited access to quality health care, healing foods, educational and cultural opportunities as well as communities that have been over-policed and underinvested in, will become the subject of our attention and investment. We envision powerful partnerships with community leaders and institutions, philanthropy, the private sector, and government that are fueled by community voice, strengthened with evidenced informed strategies, and supported by long-term commitments and investments.

We believe that if we change the prospects for how historically marginalized people — Black and Brown people in our region — generate and sustain wealth, we change every other disparity affecting them, and that this will benefit all of us.

Our strategic vision is an expression of our love for people and community. We invite you to join us on this journey of personal and community transformation.



Sincerely,

Tonia Wellons, *President & CEO*

► STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Artis Hampshire-Cowan, *Co-Chair*
Sean Morris, *Co-Chair*
Marcus Braxton
Lia Dean
Lesley-Jane Dixon

Charlene Dukes
Melanie Folstad
Ronnie Galvin
Tim Hwang
Veronica Jeon

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Together, WE PROSPER

The Greater Washington Community Foundation's mission and work has always been centered on creating a just, equitable, and thriving community. But recent events have added an urgency to our mission.

In the face of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, persistent structural racism, and stark economic injustice, Greater Washington is facing a set of multifaceted and complex challenges. And the time is past due to address them in ways that are both intentional and aspirational.

To that end, The Community Foundation embarked on a process in partnership with our Board of Trustees to develop a new, bold 10-year strategic vision that will leverage our resources and expertise to lead our community in addressing the most catalytic opportunity of our lifetimes: **closing our community's racial wealth gap.**

It's a big goal — one that will require us to align our business with our vision and advance racial equity and inclusion in all aspects of our work. It will also require us to partner with the community

in new and meaningful ways. As we do so, we will direct our attention and investments on communities that have been over-policed and underinvested in, as well as neighborhoods that are rich in cultural, community assets, and grassroots leadership. We cannot do this alone. To achieve this vision, we must forge powerful partnerships with community leaders and institutions, philanthropy, the private sector, and government — partnerships that are shaped by community voices, strengthened with evidence-informed strategies, and supported by long-term commitments and investments.

Together, we can achieve this mission. Together, our entire region will prosper.

**“WHILE *philanthropy* IS
COMMENDABLE, IT SHOULD NOT
ALLOW THE PHILANTHROPIST
TO OVERLOOK THE ECONOMIC
INJUSTICE WHICH MAKES
philanthropy NECESSARY.”**

~ DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.





What We BELIEVE

- ▶ We believe that our leadership role is to drive toward a clear and common goal: creating an environment in which every person in our community can reach their full potential, generate wealth, and achieve personal success.

- ▶ BIPOC households in the Greater Washington region - and across the U.S. - face systemic barriers that lead to disproportionately low educational outcomes, health conditions, and generational wealth.
- ▶ Together, we have the power to take action to eliminate the historic, racialized disparities in our community and set a national example of how tackling this issue can improve an entire community.
- ▶ The time is now! COVID-19 has further widened and amplified racial inequities. It requires bold, immediate action to reverse the damage caused by the pandemic and centuries of systemic inequities in our community.



Where We STAND

- ▶ Uniquely positioned at the intersection of racialized wealth and racialized poverty to lead our community toward a better future.
- ▶ Ready to be bold to achieve our goal—closing the racial wealth gap.
- ▶ Informed through our partnerships and collaboratives, grantmaking and investments, and grounded in research and community engagement.



Who We ARE



...when we refocus our work and invest our energy and resources in addressing the root causes that influence historic disparities in income and wealth, education, health, and quality of life in the first place.

Imagine what's
POSSIBLE

...where our community's social safety net is working optimally and equitably.



Imagine a
FUTURE



...where all basic needs are met.

...where there are no food deserts or disparity in health access.

Imagine a
COMMUNITY

The OPPORTUNITY

Now is the time for bold action and transformational change.

Time and again throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have encountered local and national partners who are eager to work with The Community Foundation to advance racial justice and equity and increase economic mobility, especially in our region's most underinvested neighborhoods. We have also heard loud and clear the voices from our community calling for swift action to ensure that everyone in Greater Washington has an opportunity to prosper. The first step toward achieving this vision will focus on finding ways to invite the entire community to learn, build, and invest in solutions together.

Ultimately, we believe this energized commitment to advancing racial equity and inclusion in our most underinvested neighborhoods can ignite a powerful ripple effect that will make our entire region stronger and more prosperous.

Together, we can chart a path forward to shared prosperity. Together, we can make it happen.

As this effort evolves, The Community Foundation will offer donors and partners new opportunities to make a difference. Donors will have new tools to align their philanthropy with the vision of **closing our community's racial wealth gap**; to join us in our deliberate decision toward multi-year, general operating grants; and to double down on investments in organizations led by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Our investments, alongside budget and policy advocacy make this possible and probable.

We invite you to join this journey toward creating a just, equitable, and thriving community — one in which everyone can:

- Prosper from economic stability and opportunity;
- Thrive through greater access to quality education, health care, and housing; and
- Flourish by fully exercising their talent and creativity in ways that benefit themselves, their families and neighborhoods, and our entire community.



What is THE WORK?

PILLAR 1: LEADING WITH RACIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Decades of working in the Greater Washington community have shown that many of us are substantially less likely to achieve prosperity simply because we live in neighborhoods that do not provide us with the conditions needed to succeed.

This isn't by coincidence. Recent research commissioned by The Community Foundation and conducted by Brookings finds those who live in such neighborhoods are disproportionately Black and experience negative racial disparities in life expectancy, income, unemployment, incarceration rates, and poverty. In other words, race matters.

These disparities are all closely

linked. But we can begin to eliminate them — and create a healthier and more prosperous community for all of us — if we work to address the root causes behind them and invest deliberately in strategies to address them. That's why The Community Foundation is making a bold commitment:

We will lead with racial equity and inclusion in every aspect of our work.

In other words, we will center all our work — including our grantmaking, our investments, our partnerships, our operations, and our leadership — around an equity frame that requires us to use data as we work with a spirit of shared humanity and in bold possibility.

PILLAR 2: ALIGNING OUR BUSINESS WITH OUR VISION

In order to achieve our vision for a more just and equitable Greater Washington region, we are reimagining how The Community Foundation invests in, partners with, and supports our community.

We are committed to nearly doubling The Community Foundation's assets over the next 10 years so that we are able to respond to the challenges and opportunities in front of us, at scale.

Our bold and aspirational vision for this community demands that we establish a legacy for lasting change. That means building an endowment for our Community

Foundation that generates robust discretionary funds to support and sustain our operations and our targeted investments to serve the community today while preparing for the needs of tomorrow.

To do so, we plan to offer a broader range of products to existing and new fundholders, including funds that are specific to fields of interest and geography, as well as endowed memorial and crisis response funds. We believe that organizing communities of givers through giving circles, collaboratives, and co-investment opportunities can lead to more powerful and impactful philanthropy.

What is THE WORK?

PILLAR 3: CLOSING THE RACIAL WEALTH GAP

History tells us that our region's racial wealth gap won't close itself.

- In DC, White households have 81 times more net worth than Black households.
- In Fairfax County, if racial income gaps were closed, its gross domestic product would increase by \$26.2 billion a year.
- Dynamics related to race and wealth have persisted in American society and remain at the heart of the disparities we have been working to address in our communities.
- Given how race and wealth intersect in all BIPOC communities (LGBTQ+, gender, ability), if Black people are wealthier, then everyone is better off – and wealthier in every way.

At The Community Foundation, our initial focus is framed around a three-pronged approach:

- Pursuing an equitable recovery from COVID-19.
- Increasing economic mobility and connecting philanthropy to impact.
- Investing in strengthening our neighborhoods and community institutions.

Further, we will leverage our leadership and relationships — developed through decades of ongoing work in housing and workforce development and on initiatives like Putting Race on the Table and VoicesDMV — to focus on creating change at the neighborhood level.

HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

Who are the historically marginalized people and communities in our region? There are nuances based on geography but based on the data: Black people in our region are faring worse on almost every measure of well-being. We also recognize that other communities of color — especially Hispanic and Asian American and Pacific Islanders are also experiencing significant hardship. And admittedly, we need to do more to understand Indigenous communities in our region. You may

hear us reference the commonly used term, BIPOC, which stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and is inclusive of all marginalized groups. However, we recognize there is no one size fits all language when talking about race and we respect racial and ethnic differences. With that in mind, you will also hear us reference Black and Brown people when talking about the most marginalized in our community based on the data.

The

TIME IS NOW

If we change the prospects for how Black and Brown people generate, sustain, and share wealth, we change every other disparity affecting Black and Brown people – and all of us.

At the nexus of our strategic vision is our resolve to confront perhaps the most stubborn root cause of persistent inequities that have been amplified by COVID-19 – the glaring and intolerable racial wealth gap in the Greater Washington region.

Greater Washington is home to nine of the 20 wealthiest counties in the United States – but families in our community are not equally sharing in this wealth. By almost every measure – education, income, housing, health, and wealth – our community’s Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, and other People of Color are significantly lagging behind their White neighbors.

Greater Washington isn’t unique in facing this challenge. Yet, what sets us apart is the stark inequities that have led to some of the nation’s wealthiest zip

codes being just a short drive from some of its poorest.

As home to the nation’s capital – and all the prestige, influence, wealth, and power it provides –

We can and must do better.

And that is what we intend to do by making **closing the racial wealth gap** our priority.

Our community needs strong leadership to do the difficult but essential work of identifying the most promising ways to make progress toward closing the gap, and then mobilizing the resources and support to make it happen.

Consider these statistics*:

- 17.7% of Black residents in DC live in racially or ethnically-concentrated areas of poverty – compared with just 1% of White residents.
- 11.4% of Black and 10.5% of Latinx residents live below the poverty line in DC – compared with 4.3% of White residents.
- Median per capita income among White residents in DC is more than three times higher than for their Black neighbors.

*Sources: Brookings Institution, Urban Institute, and data tracking from the Greater Washington Partnership

This must change.

At The Community Foundation, we welcome that leadership role to drive toward a clear and common goal: creating an environment in which every person in our community can reach their full potential, generate wealth, and achieve personal and professional success.



Our LEARNING JOURNEY

Ultimately, we believe opportunity is not a **zero-sum game**. When we make it possible for everyone to thrive, it will strengthen our community and all of us will have greater opportunity.

And it is through this unleashed opportunity that we can create a more vibrant regional economy, and a more resilient community that is fully prepared for the challenges that lie ahead.

Over the next 6 months, we will continue our learning journey to help inform and influence our plan for how we will achieve this vision in partnership with our community. This work is important and requires extensive community outreach and listening. To achieve our vision of **closing our region's racial wealth gap**, we need to listen to the community, identify opportunities to partner, and build support. That process will take time — but you can expect that we will be transparent about what we learn and aspirational about what we hope to accomplish.

That's why we are excited to share this new vision with the community now — and begin the process of building new relationships, hearing ideas, and turning that vision into an action plan.

We know achieving this goal won't be easy, and won't happen overnight. The racial wealth gap is borne out of systemic racism that is deep-rooted and far reaching throughout our community. We don't have all the answers, but we are gaining a deeper understanding of the questions that can lead us toward progress, as well as a commitment to listen to the full range of voices in our community to help guide us on this journey.

Join us as we

BUILD THE FUTURE

INVEST DIRECTLY IN THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Make an unrestricted, multi-year gift and become a champion for your community. Your gift will ensure we can continue to serve as this community's quarter back in times of acute crisis; and as we respond to the daily crises of people in our region. In order to achieve our vision for this region, we need your investment in our infrastructure.

REFER YOUR CLIENTS OR FRIENDS

For your clients or friends who are interested in making a transformational impact, refer them to us. We are a community foundation. Our super-power is knowing this community, connecting the dots, and driving toward impact.

JOIN US ON A LEARNING JOURNEY

Join us to learn more about the intersection of race and wealth in the Greater Washington region, and the opportunity to **close the wealth gap** and increase economic mobility. Contact us at **202-955-5890** or **donorservices@thecommunityfoundation.org** to learn how you can get involved.



Glossary of IMPORTANT TERMS

BIPOC

An abbreviation for 'Black, Indigenous, and People of Color'. The term originated in Canada, where it is used instead of terms like "minority", "racialized", or "underserved", and is considered to be a more inclusive term for POC (People of Color). 'BIPOC' and 'POC' are synonymous and only have different countries of origin. Use is a matter of personal or organizational preference. When speaking of a particular racial/ethnic group, it is appropriate to name that group specifically instead of using the broad umbrella term of 'BIPOC' or 'POC'

a. Source: *Tanya Hayles*

Diversity

Diversity encompasses all different characteristics that make an individual or group different from one another. It encompasses race, ethnicity, and gender, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. This involves different ideas and values.

a. Source: *UC Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, "Glossary of Terms" (page 34 in 2009 Strategic Plan).*

b. Source: *Baltimore Racial Justice Action, "Our Definitions" (2018).*

Equity

Equity is a state to which we aspire that we have not yet achieved. Racial equity is not just the absence of overt racial discrimination; it is also the presence of deliberate policies and practices that provide everyone with the support they need to improve the quality of their lives. It is a state in which all people in a given society share equal rights and opportunities. To pursue equity, policies, and frameworks for society, we must address the underlying and systemic differences of opportunity and access to social resources.

a. Source: *NREWG*

Inclusion

Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. More than simply diversity and numerical representation, inclusion involves authentic and empowered participation and a true sense of belonging.

a. Source: *Combination of NREWG and Annie E. Casey*

Racial Equity

Racial equity (or racial justice) is the systematic fair treatment of all people, resulting in fair opportunities and outcomes for everyone. Racial equity is not just the absence of discrimination but also the presence of values and systems that ensure fairness and justice. As an outcome, we achieve racial equity when race no longer determines one's socioeconomic outcomes; when everyone has what they need to thrive, no matter where they live. As a process, we apply racial equity when those most impacted by structural racial inequity are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives.

a. Source: *EdJustice*

b. Source: *RaceForward*

Systemic Racism

A system in which public policies, institutions, cultural representations, and others work in various ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It defines parts of our history and culture that have allowed privileges that are associated with whiteness and disadvantages that come with being a Black, Indigenous, or Brown person. It is a feature that exists in all our social, economic, and political systems.

a. Source: *Aspen Institute*

