



Brown County United Way



## NEWS RELEASE

---

1/31/2022  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:  
Tom Schoffelman  
Brown County United Way  
920.328.3959  
[tom@browncountyunitedway.org](mailto:tom@browncountyunitedway.org)

Amanda Gay  
Greater Green Bay Community Foundation  
920.362.2075  
[amandagay@ggbcf.org](mailto:amandagay@ggbcf.org)

### **Brown County United Way and Greater Green Bay Community Foundation launch diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging collaborative partnership**

*First initiative aims to create structural and organizational change*

GREEN BAY—In remembrance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the brilliant leader who challenged our country to rise up and answer the call to action for a more just world, Brown County United Way (BCUW) and the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation (GGBCF) announce the launch of a diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging collaborative partnership.

The purpose of the partnership is to address and ultimately change the structural and institutional racist principles that exist in many organizations and across sectors of society in Brown County.

“The health of these sectors is critical to the health of a community,” said Rashad Cobb, community engagement program officer at GGBCF. “This partnership offers the opportunity to strengthen the capacity of agencies and partners in the diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) space.”

The partnership’s first initiative will be a series of trainings providing a comprehensive understanding of bias, privilege, discrimination and equity. Participants will also examine their own policies as they relate to structural racism and be given guidance on how to develop new plans that create a healthy DEIB space for everyone. The trainings, which are scheduled to begin in May, will be limited to organizations that have a current active relationship with either BCUW or GGBCF.

With the creation of this new collaborative, both organizations are taking next steps in combatting racism.

“We want to expand our influence and offer our nonprofit partners the tools they need to create structural and institutional change inside their organizations and across the nonprofit sector,” said Holly Ladwig, BCUW’s program investment and 2-1-1 manager. “To be successful as a community, we must come together to make a conscious effort to address the causes of our divisions and the need to make our communities safer and engage in meaningful change.”

The DEIB trainings are an important step in the journey of creating a true space of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

“The vision is to create a system that delivers helping efforts in such a way that individuals are empowered and one in which we act with mutual respect for all,” Cobb said. “One day we hope we can look out into our community as one that is built on our diversity so that we all do better together.”

The need for accelerated DEIB work was identified by local nonprofit leaders participating in the Nonprofit Impact Initiative, a local funding and program collaborative facilitated by GGBCF. As nonprofits identify their greatest needs, this initiative provides opportunities for organizations and individuals to build upon their existing capacities.

As a result of this work, GGBCF and BCUW developed the DEIB collaborative partnership. This effort will increase individuals’ and organizations’ knowledge and understanding of topics related to DEIB, while highlighting the issues that have led to disparities in outcomes for an increasing number of community members.

BCUW has long been making DEIB a tenet of its work. In 2015, it began offering trauma-informed care trainings and community-awareness events that include training on the relationship of psychological trauma and the effects of discrimination on individuals, organizations and systems.

In 2020, following the George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery murders, it published its United Way Forward statement condemning racism. That statement reads in part: “As we look to the immediate future and beyond, Brown County United Way will continue to engage in the necessary systemic advocacy work that will bring about lasting change both within our organization and throughout the community. Our history of collaboration with diverse stakeholders will and must continue so that multiple perspectives are represented, respected and engaged as we forge the path forward. Now more than ever, we need to Live United. Silence is not an option.”

Then this past year BCUW helped present, on two occasions, a 21-Week Equity Challenge. This online educational program helped develop a deeper understanding of how inequity and racism affect our lives and communities. In Brown County more than 1,500 community members registered for the challenge, one of the largest participation rates in the state.

-30-

**About Brown County United Way:** Founded in 1925, Brown County United Way is a center for community-based strategies. Through direct fundraising, grant making, community mobilization, and advocacy efforts, Brown County United Way leverages all its organizational resources and deep local partnerships to advance targeted community solutions. With the help of more than 500 community volunteers from all community sectors, Brown County United Way is dedicated to finding solutions to the community’s most pressing human-services issues. [www.browncountyunitedway.org](http://www.browncountyunitedway.org)

**About the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation:** Established in 1991, the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation has provided more than \$152 million in grants since inception to improve the quality of life in Northeastern Wisconsin. As a nonprofit charitable organization, the Community Foundation manages more than 700 funds with assets exceeding



Brown County United Way



\$200 million. Over the past year, \$17.7 million in grants were distributed to nonprofit organizations. Our mission is to inspire and encourage charitable giving in Northeast Wisconsin by connecting caring people with solutions to strengthen our community. [www.ggbcf.org](http://www.ggbcf.org)