



In light of the recent spotlight placed on racial injustice in our country, the staff and board of the Lakeshore Nonprofit Alliance (LNA) feels strongly that it is our responsibility to articulate our view on this matter and what we as an organization will commit to doing in the weeks, months, and years ahead in response. In doing this, we recognize that we don't have all the answers and will likely make mistakes along the way. Nevertheless, we are committed to listening, learning, and growing along with the rest of our nonprofit partners around this important issue. First and foremost, we condemn racism in all of its forms and structures. We acknowledge that for too long people of color have suffered in our country from unjust systems of oppression and that we as a country have either neglected these calls completely or have been too slow in our response to act. We believe that it is no longer acceptable that we as individuals and organizations claim to "not be racist" but that we all have a collective responsibility to become "anti-racist" and work to actively rooting out racism in all its forms. As a membership-based organization that serves our local nonprofit community, we specifically call on nonprofits to assess what being anti-racist might mean for you.

We as nonprofits must recognize that many of the challenges we seek to address in our missions, whether that be to eliminate poverty, house the homeless, care for older adults, feed the hungry, provide mental health treatment, protect the environment, increase access to education, etc., have roots in racial injustice. Therefore, if we are truly committed to meeting our missions, then we see it as our collective responsibility to actively become anti-racists.

And while each organization assesses what being anti-racist might mean for them long-term, LNA would like to suggest a few steps to begin with:

- First, educate yourself on how racial inequity impacts individuals, organizations and communities. There are so many good resources out there between books, podcasts, videos, TED Talks, etc. that can better inform us on these issues. We as nonprofits must take a posture of genuine learning to expand our knowledge of racism's pervasive presence in our society and deepen our understanding of the multitude of ways this impacts individuals' lived experiences. Just as many of us invest in corporate professional development to become a better leader, manager, project manager, etc., so too must we invest in becoming a better racial justice advocate.
- Second, listen. Listen when people of color share their experiences of racial injustice. If you are fortunate enough to have staff, board, volunteers, donors, or clients who are willing to tell you about their own lived experiences with racism, listen with gratitude and humility. And while we encourage listening, we don't endorse putting the hard work of becoming an anti-racist organization on people of color. We each have a responsibility to reflect on what we learn and hear and take action if we want to make progress.

- Third, engage in dialogue. Create dedicated space for conversations and learning internally with your staff, board and volunteers. The more we talk about these important matters, the more informed and aware we become and the more opportunity we have to make progress. Engaging in dialogue also means showing up when our community has critical conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Finally, commit to action. We should actively look for opportunities within our own organizations to create more equitable policies, practices, and organizational culture. We must give care and attention not just to the “what” of our work but the “who”, the “why”, and the “how” if we want to advance racial equity. This is not a “once and done” activity but rather an ongoing analysis to determine how our organization’s actions may be inequitably advantageous to certain people while disenfranchising others.

A core value that the Lakeshore Nonprofit Alliance holds deeply centers on “Inclusion.” Over the past several years we have strived to grow in what this means for us internally as well as the broader nonprofit sector. We are nowhere near perfect in this effort but are fully committed to trying to push ourselves to continue making progress. In the hopes of leading by example, LNA is committed to taking further concrete action to live into this core value and to becoming an anti-racist organization. As an organization, LNA will be making the following commitments as part of our anti-racist agenda:

1. Representatives of LNA will be signing the Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance’s community [Pledge](#) to publicly commit to becoming anti-racist.
2. Continue to promote and provide public support for individuals and organizations that are actively fighting for racial equity and against racism.
3. Incorporate an “equity lens” to our programs, practices, and policies including the use of an “inclusive checklist” when designing LNA programming.
4. Launch a 12-month peer-to-peer learning opportunity for nonprofit leaders who are committed to expanding diversity, equity, and inclusion within their organizations.
5. Host a listening session by and for people of color who work in our local nonprofit sector to center future LNA action steps around their lived experiences. LNA will also commit an initial investment of \$2,500 to support recommendations identified by this group.
6. Sponsor and coordinate ongoing anti-racism training on behalf of our nonprofit members and the larger community.

- **Lakeshore Nonprofit Alliance Board and Staff**