

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Team (DEI) – YMCA of Greater Kalamazoo

### Statement of Commitment

The Y is a diverse organization of people joined together by a shared commitment to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. Our cause-driven YMCA staff and volunteers intentionally and continuously strive to promote a safe and inclusive organizational culture that values diversity and strengthens inclusion. We seek to ensure that all segments of society have access to the Y and feel welcome and fully engaged as participants, members, staff, and volunteers. The Y is a force for building bridges among all people to advance our cause of strengthening community.

Our purpose at the Y is helping people achieve their full potential, while our niche is building healthy families across generations. As we see it, a community where every person can reach full potential is one in which identities such as race and ethnicity are not predictors of an individual's ability to live a high-quality, self-determined life.

To transform our organization and community by dismantling bias, and to be more accountable to people who are historically underrepresented, **we have created a DEI team**. This work is being done in partnership with various community partners.

The DEI team provides essential leadership in designing the process to becoming an inclusive and anti-racist organization, and ensures accountability toward this goal. The team is charged with:

- Researching Y policies, practices and behaviors
- Identifying and revealing the ways bias is inherent within and perpetuated by the structure of our Association
- Committing to our responsibility to address and dismantle barriers that oppresses marginalized populations within our community and strive to develop policies, practices and behaviors that are inclusive and eliminate bias
- Recognizing that all community members with marginalized identities deserve affirmation, respect, and equity
- Fostering the internal growth and transformation of our organization by securing the training, skills, and technology needed to empower staff, board, and volunteers to dismantle bias inside our Association
- Harnessing the opportunity for leadership inherent in our position in the community to work to dismantle bias beyond our own walls

#### **Our Commitment**

YMCA of Greater Kalamazoo envisions itself as an institution that will consider anti-bias in all of our decision-making and actions, and has made the commitment to long-term anti-bias work through the formation of the DEI Team.

#### **DEI Team Mandate**

By the authority of the YMCA of Greater Kalamazoo Board of Directors, the team will provide leadership, direction, and coordination to the work of dismantling racist systems by investigating and recommending revision to external and internal policies and procedures, addressing internal commitment and supporting and engaging staff and the community in building an antiracist identity and culture.

With this mandate from the board, the DEI team will focus on structural and programmatic transformation, inclusive of but not limited to the delivery of services to the public, such as membership policies, programming, and employment practices.

This focus is imperative to ensure we meet the needs of and are accountable to our diverse community.

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### About the Team

Members of the DEI team possess a combination of skills, qualities, cultural backgrounds, and experiences that ensure the team is successfully contributing to this process. Members dedicate themselves to continuing progress in anti-bias work within the Association for at least a three-year period with the possibility of continued participation.

This journey is a long one and demands that team members clearly communicate objectives and maintain trust and confidence among all members. Qualities looked for in DEI team members include:

- **Diversity** - The DEI team will be comprised of approximately 9 to 15 members of diverse identities, cultures, races, genders, religions, ages, and life experiences. Committee membership is comprised of YMCA staff, Board members, and volunteers.
- **Team Oriented** - Team members should have the ability to exercise empathy and build strong trust, collaboration, and communication among diverse identities and membership.
- **Strategic** - Ability to create, analyze, and evaluate strategies to determine the most effective methods for combating bias within the Association.
- **Understanding and Application of an Anti-Bias Analysis** - Understanding of the concept of institutional bias, ability to identify it within YMCA functions, and offer productive feedback/strategies to advance organizational development.
- **Self-Reflection** - Ability to address one's own personal prejudices, biases, and participation in perpetuating bias.
- **Project Management** - Possess skills to help move anti-bias planning forward, implementation steps, time management, and communication.
- **Listening** - Ability to listen actively, creatively, and reflectively. In order to work together and promote a sense of trust and camaraderie, this ability is necessary so that members can share personal experience and feel heard and supported.
- **Commitment** - Willingness to dedicate significant time to the cause through an intensive training process.

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Printed Name

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Signature

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Date