



# PHILANTHROPIES OF COLOR

IN THE BUFFALO-NIAGARA REGION





**This review of  
the landscape of  
Philanthropies of Color  
showcases the diversity  
of these organizations, their  
aspirations as a group, and  
next steps that build on  
their collective strengths  
to create a vibrant  
Buffalo-Niagara  
Region.**

■ This review of Philanthropies of Color in the Buffalo-Niagara Region was prepared by the Communities of Giving Legacy Initiative (CGLI) and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The CGLI was created in 2008 to increase philanthropy within and for Western New York communities of color. The CGLI also seeks to cultivate positive change in the lives of youth of color living within Western New York via access to people, places, and experiences that help them achieve positive life goals. As a convener and capacity-builder for communities of color, the CGLI provides institutions and individuals with opportunities to raise and direct their own resources toward long-lasting change.



Support for this report is provided by:



# WHY THE MOMENT IS NOW...



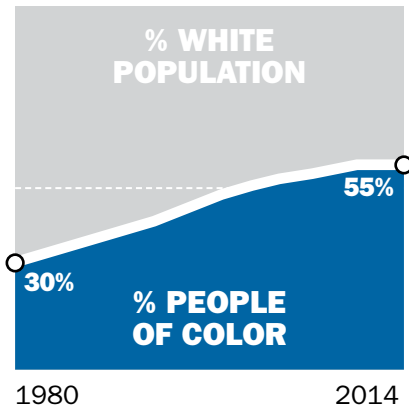
**The Buffalo-Niagara Region** is the fortunate home of a wealth of Philanthropies of Color, all working through individual fundraising, advocacy, programs, and more to support youth of color. Although many may not self-identify as “philanthropies,” these groups work to address challenges and connect communities of color to opportunities in the Buffalo-Niagara Region.

**The City of Buffalo is the major urban center in the region and continues to grow in diversity. People of color now comprise more than 50% of the population.**

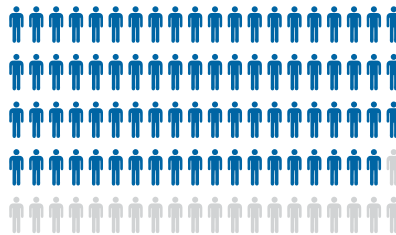
**In the 2014-2015 school year, 25,571 students of color were enrolled in Buffalo Public Schools and all are eligible for support services and scholarships through Say Yes Buffalo.**

**People of color are earning more college degrees from local institutions, allowing growth in the region’s skilled workforce and increased job opportunities.**

CITY OF BUFFALO RACIAL/ETHNIC COMPOSITION



U.S. CENSUS BUREAU



**of 2014-15 BPS students were youth of color**

NYS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**At a minimum, the Western New York region will need to fill**



**165,000**  
job openings in 10 years

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, NYS DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

**A FULL REGIONAL RENAISSANCE IS ONLY POSSIBLE WITH AN INTENTIONAL FOCUS ON EQUITY, PARTICULARLY THROUGH SUPPORT FOR YOUTH OF COLOR.**

# THE LANDSCAPE



**M**ore than 100 Philanthropies of Color have been identified in the Buffalo-Niagara Region. These philanthropies are defined by the CGLI as organizations that use their time, talent, treasure, and ties to improve the quality of life for communities of color in the region. In creating the landscape, the CGLI examined organizations that were founded, led, and/or governed primarily by people of color and were not affiliated with religious institutions. Each organization brings different assets that uniquely address challenges in the community as described below:



## YOUTH SERVING

An organization that has programming targeted to youth.

- **Has face-to-face contact with youth on a daily basis**
- **Able to voice youth-specific concerns**
- **Has expertise in program implementation for youth**



## TRADE

An organization whose members are comprised of a particular industry or profession.

- **Membership has expertise in a wide range of skills and professions**
- **Access to a professional network with mentoring opportunities**



## IDENTITY

An organization whose members identify with one specific or set of racial or ethnic groups.

- **Has a finger on the pulse of a specific community**
- **Able to voice concerns of constituent members with cultural sensitivity and acuity**



## FUNDRAISING

An organization with a primary purpose to raise funds for communities of color.

- **Able to mobilize resources to support the needs of the community**
- **Builds strong relationships with people of influence**



## GREEK/FRATERNAL

Fraternal groups with historic ties to a specific race or ethnicity.

- **Community service oriented**
- **Source of mentorship and networking**
- **Close knit membership with socially-minded ideals**



## NEIGHBORHOOD

An organization whose mission is to support a specific, geographically defined community.

- **Offers a welcoming, familiar environment for youth**
- **Aware of the most pressing issues facing a specific community**

**THOUGH DIVERSE IN SIZE AND MISSION, PHILANTHROPIES OF COLOR WORK TO PROVIDE SUPPORT AND ENRICH THE LIVES OF YOUTH OF COLOR.**

# THE NETWORK

Eleven local Philanthropies of Color have joined together with the support of the CGLI to form The Network. These organizations pool their resources, share their knowledge, and learn from one another to better address the issues facing the communities they serve. The Network is listed below.



## The Belle Center

is a multi-purpose community center in the Lower West Side offering educational, social, and community building services for children, youth, senior citizens, and families living in WNY.



## Massachusetts Avenue Project

nurtures the growth of a diverse and equitable local food system and promotes local economic opportunities, access to affordable, nutritious food, social change education, and advocacy for food related policy.



## Buffalo Center for Arts and Technology

is a place of hope and opportunity, offering after-school arts programs and adult vocational training.



## Minority Bar Association of Western New York Foundation

is comprised of minority attorneys in Western New York, whose goals are to ensure the civil rights of all people and promote diversity.



## Burmese Community Support Center

promotes and enhances the quality of life for refugees from Burma living in Buffalo.



## The Miss Borinquen of Western New York

is a leadership development program for Hispanic girls between the ages of 15-19, designed to help build well-rounded and empowered role models for the community.



is an organization of college educated women committed to constructive development of its members and to public service with a primary focus on the Black community.



## Native American Community Services of Western New York

provides quality human services that meet the needs of the off-reservation Native American community in Erie and Niagara Counties.



## Hispanic Heritage Council of Western New York, Inc.

fosters and inspires awareness, understanding, and appreciation of past, present, and future contributions of the Hispanic community with a dedication to preserving the history of Hispanics in WNY for future generations.



## Somali Bantu Community Organization of Buffalo

educates and empowers refugees and immigrants in Buffalo and Erie County to become self-sufficient and active citizens, while preserving their traditions, languages, and cultures that bond to a dynamic community.



## Buffalo Alumnae Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.

is a brotherhood of college educated men committed to leadership and service of the Buffalo community, with a particular emphasis on African American communities.



# THE ASPIRATIONS



**P**aying it forward with time, talent, treasure, and ties to empower our community's youth is the motto of local Philanthropies of Color. This spirit of giving is imperative when connecting generations through philanthropy and ensuring this great tradition continues.

During five focus group discussions, local philanthropists of color voiced three aspirational themes: building pipelines, generating awareness, and strengthening collaboration. These themes drive their work towards **one overarching goal** – to empower, support, and provide youth of color with access to increasing opportunities in the region.



## 1 BUILDING PIPELINES

Building pipelines for youth of color with various mentoring opportunities and support services exposes them to different people, places, and experiences. Equipped with the tools and a vision to succeed, youth of color will grow into tomorrow's driven leaders of the Buffalo-Niagara Region.



## 2 GENERATING AWARENESS

A voice at the table for communities and youth of color requires being a part of the decision-making process and improving local understanding of the challenges facing communities of color. Creating awareness around these causes will guarantee that the voices of youth of color are amplified today and for future generations to come.



## 3 STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION

Philanthropies of Color in the Buffalo-Niagara Region share fundamental common values that naturally lead to a common community purpose. Although most of these organizations are unfamiliar with one another's work, their missions align and lead to a desire for natural collaboration, thus leveraging collective power.

**EMPOWER, SUPPORT, AND PROVIDE YOUTH OF COLOR WITH ACCESS TO INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE REGION.**

# MOVING FORWARD



**T**he CGLI strives to increase philanthropy within and for Western New York communities of color and is well positioned to connect the region's growth to community efforts already underway. In response to the region's economic resurgence, the CGLI has researched and convened local Philanthropies of Color to help connect youth to this rapidly changing landscape.

As a convener and capacity-builder for communities of color, the CGLI will continue to partner and support the aspirations of Buffalo-Niagara Philanthropies of Color by:

**1**

**LINKING AND ENCOURAGING** collaboration among communities and organizations.

**2**

**CONTINUING TO CONNECT** generations through philanthropy and programming efforts that provide access to networking events, social gatherings, and the opportunity to pay it forward.

**3**

**AMPLIFYING AND ECHOING** the voices of Buffalo-Niagara Philanthropies of Color and their needs.

**4**

**BUILDING AWARENESS** among the region's Philanthropies of Color on national strategies that support, reinforce, and add value to ongoing efforts and investments benefiting youth of color within and beyond the region.



**“IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST,  
GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT  
TO GO FAR, **GO TOGETHER.**”**

— AFRICAN PROVERB

