



Verdant Health Commission

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan

2022



HEALTH COMMISSION
SERVING SOUTH SNOHOMISH COUNTY





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the program of Public Hospital District No. 2, Snohomish County, the Verdant Health Commission is a municipal corporation with a Board of Commissioners that includes 5 governing elected officials. They grant to community groups working to address the health needs of residents. Verdant also offers free or low-cost education and prevention classes at the Verdant Community Wellness Center, located in Lynnwood.

The South Snohomish County community served by Verdant has seen changing demographics in recent years that necessitate a thoughtful and strategic approach to this work with a DEI lens to improve health outcomes for refugees, immigrants, and BIPOC communities. In the summer of 2021, Verdant initiated a DEI process to acquire a greater understanding, and take specific action to fully engage DEI practices at the organizational level.

Upon an RFP selection process, KAYA strategik LLC was selected by staff and commissioners for the project period of October 2021 – April 2022 with the following scope of work:

- Assess how Verdant's current operations, including policies and practices, support DEI.
- Review the Verdant staff's outreach and community engagement and provide recommendations for creating inclusive relationships with our communities.
- Work with the Verdant staff to create definitions and metrics for gauging their success serving diverse communities.
- Recommend 3-5 actionable DEI strategies for the Verdant team to implement in the next 12 months.
- Share best practices of similar community health philanthropy work.

Over the project period, KAYA strategik engaged in one-to-one informational interviews with staff and stakeholders, attended staff and program meetings and facilitated DEI work meetings with staff to co-develop the 3-5 actionable recommendations. This DEI report provides an assessment of feedback from the diverse community partners and staff that were interviewed. Based on the assessment, the following five priority short-term 2022 DEI action recommendations were developed to implement and advance equity and inclusion at the Verdant Health Commission:

- Outreach and Engagement - Community Health Workers
- Community Relationships - Facilities Open House and Meet & Greets
- Grants and Resources - Community Health Needs Assessment
- Organization - Operational Plan
- Leadership - Personal and professional growth, relationship and team building

PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY

This action plan was created to build upon Verdant's DEI commitment to working to achieve inclusive, equitable health opportunities regardless of culture, income, gender, ability, immigration status, or native language.

The purpose of this DEI action plan is to assess how Verdant's current operations, including policies and practices, support diversity, equity and inclusion.

KAYA worked with Verdant staff in October and November 2021 to solicit input and to plan the project. An initial survey of staff was administered to gain a baseline understanding of strengths and opportunities, followed with more in-depth one to one staff informational interviews. KAYA also reviewed and discussed with relevant Verdant staff outreach and community engagement needs and recommendations for creating inclusive relationships with Verdant's communities.

Over a three month period from December 2021 - February of 2022, KAYA's team conducted one to one interviews with 18 community stakeholders from 14 partner organizations from a list provided by Verdant in addition to interviewing 8 staff members. Each of these interviews were conducted via zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each community Interview consisted of four (4) questions* that were meant to gather feedback around Verdant's grantmaking practices, outreach and engagement, culturally responsive programming, and community partnership best practices.

Finally, KAYA facilitated a DEI working session with the Verdant staff to co-develop and recommend 3-5 actionable DEI strategies to implement within the next 12 months. Cost implications have been provided for implementing the DEI recommendations.

*See Appendix A for list of questions.

Note: To protect confidentiality, anonymity and safety, individual names have been redacted from interviews.



COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

C3 Coalition

Project Girl

LETI

Millenia Ministries

Helping Hands

Gambian Talents
Promotion/ WA West
African Center

Jean Kim Foundation

Cocoon House

Snohomish County Legal
Services

Brain Energy Support
Team

SeaMar

Community Foundation
for Snohomish County

Sound Pathways/
Pacific Treatment
Alternatives

PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY

Inside the Interviews



14

Organizations

Community
Partners



18



8

Staff Members

SUMMARY THEMES & FINDINGS

Outreach & Engagement



- Appreciation as a Community Connector
- Process for data collection and sharing out of community statistics
- Community owned programming over replication or internally creating new programming (own or house/incubate or case by case)
- Connecting smaller organizations to additional non financial support
- Verdant to create a COVID response that includes mental health support for partners
- Awareness of services

Grants & Resources



- Grant application navigation and relatively smooth reporting process
- Supporting community organization in capacity building and making additional funding connections
- Less rigid granting parameters allowing for the grantees to guide their funding needs
- Cultural Awareness in grants process

Community Relationships



- Current staff have provided an open and supportive environment for grantees
- More opportunity for fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Create an approach for outreach that is culturally relevant and centered in equity
- Utilize position of power & voice to being an effective advocate for community needs
- Interest in wider community access to Verdant kitchen
- Find ways to make getting around the building easier for individuals visiting
- Create a system that allows grantees to available Verdant office space
- Expansion and Improvement of Roundtable Discussions
- Utilizing space as a community service hub

Organization



- Salary equity
- Eliminate silos, duplicative work and increase coordination and communications
- Opportunity for staff to have safe space to express workplace concerns.
- A process to update shared values and goals (e.g. an operational plan that guides leadership on implementation of goals and priorities)

Leadership



- Align staff and commission priorities with the changing demographics of South Snohomish County constituents
- Facilitate and support personal and professional development of each employee.
- Strong interest in leadership trainings, particularly around DEI to increase effectiveness in serving diverse constituency
- Team and relationship building

THEMES & FINDINGS: OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

“ *The roundtables are one of the more outstanding things they have created.* ”

Appreciation as a Community Connector

The Roundtables work extremely well with the community - “One of the more outstanding things they have created.” These sessions are not only an opportunity to learn more about Verdant’s grant programs, but also an opportunity to learn about resources from other agencies that participate in the Roundtables. The current relationship fosters innovation, and both parties are willing to stretch and listen to those on the ground. Verdant acts as a Community Connector in order to mobilize residents around issues. Verdant can be more aligned with the organization’s vision and addressing the unique needs of community based organizations through these financial and relational partnerships.

An Outreach Approach that is Culturally Relevant and Centered in Equity

Community stakeholders interviewed expressed their overall experience with Verdant over the years as positive. There is hope that Verdant is taking steps in this direction of addressing and increasing culturally responsive programming. Verdant has a role in using its “predominantly white” voice and privilege to address issues affecting immigrant and BIPOC communities. There is a level of distrust among immigrant and undocumented people, and public acknowledgment of problems within Snohomish County would go a long way toward restoring trust and community standing.

A COVID Response that includes Mental Health Support for Partners

Questions arose around how larger organizations recognize deeper issues as a result of the pandemic; and how is Verdant planning for the future and supporting community organizations? Verdant has a role in providing wraparound services to improve the community’s mental health as well as to support frontline workers.

One suggestion was through diverse community engagement promoting and/or coordinating community health fairs. Wellness checks and vaccine sites, with Verdant as the main organizer and collaborating with community members to work on preventive care can contribute to preventative care work. Another suggestion was for Verdant to have staff that could provide mental support and technical assistance to grantees. This could be a professional who specializes in mindfulness, burnout, and employee emotional support training. Verdant can consider bringing on such professionals to provide mental health support to front-line employees as an additional resource and benefit to grantees, particularly to reach diverse multicultural community backgrounds.



THEMES & FINDINGS: COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

“ *Allow for smaller BIPOC orgs to use space and share the spaces.* ”

Utilizing Space as a Community Service Hub

Offering space is an effective way to connect with the community while also filling a need for local organizations. Verdant has the ability to provide both leadership and convening space. Grantees have stated that Verdant has been an excellent partner, allowing them to use the space for teaching and learning purposes.

Verdant hosted roundtable meetings were useful for getting a general update on the organizations in the area. Verdant could continue to serve as a neutral party in bringing agencies together through strategic collaboration with and connecting or unifying various entities. Verdant has room for improvement in terms of better utilizing their space for other programming. Many organizations duplicate community drives and other events. A suggestion was made that a single drive could be held in the Verdant space, and they would act as a centralizer to bring people in; creating a one-stop shop of community service provisions, similar to a community fair.

There is also the possibility of other community engagement, such as promoting or putting on health fairs with Verdant as a partner or key organizer and working with community members to work on preventive care. One way to accomplish this is to look for a mental health or relevant month to use as an opportunity to bring people together.

Interest in Wider Community Access to Verdant Kitchen

Organizations would like Verdant to consider commercial and community development applications for their kitchen. Communities would like to be and feel welcome to the space, particularly opportunities to register to use the accessible kitchen. The current perception among community members is that they are unaware of any organization that has used the kitchen. When asked about the space, a community member stated, "The vibe I got was it was expensive and don't ask." Opening the Verdant kitchen space would be a great way to not only create a welcoming space within the Verdant offices, but also support the community in a tangible way.



THEMES & FINDINGS: COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

“ *Allow for smaller BIPOC orgs to use space and share the spaces.* ”

Create a System that Allows Grantees to Use Available Verdant Office Space

Aside from using the Verdant space as a connection point, there is also a need and interest for the Verdant space for business purposes. A suggestion was a more seamless way to rent out space. "There should be a private exchange for the grantees. Allow for smaller BIPOC orgs to make proposals in order to use space and share the the spaces." For example, using an online form and reservation system that grantees can use could to help facilitate potential needs of the organization/community.

Awareness of Facilities as a Resource in General

Grantees were generally unaware that the facilities were a resource that could be utilized. General education and awareness of that option as a resource from Verdant would be beneficial. While the pandemic currently limits space gathering, as groups with whom Verdant works with look to resume in-person meetings, there is an opportunity to look to Verdant for physical rental space for workshops and events if it is available.

Building and Space Way-Finding

Community members noted that there are times when they require a meeting space for 50-60 people, and while Verdant has that space, some people do not want to go to a building that resembles a government building that they have never visited. This speaks to the importance of fostering community trust in order to create a more comfortable environment.

One aspect of this is that it is frequently difficult for visitors to find their way into and around the Verdant office. Creating accessible way-finding around the building's exterior and interior would improve the experience of those looking for services.



THEMES & FINDINGS: GRANTS & RESOURCES

“Believe folks when they say this is a community need.”

Current Staff have Provided an Open and Supportive Environment for Grantees

The community's perception of Verdant employees has been generally positive. Changes from the top have made it easier to work with and request funds from. The new hires have been fantastic, and the grantees are overjoyed to have them. Staff visits to grantee operations were highly valued. Community members appreciated that Verdant staff were genuinely interested in the organization's mission and vision, and that staff genuinely want to help grantees grow and thrive. The staff is very approachable and receptive to questions; and staff have worked hard to develop meaningful relationships.

Staff were able to connect grantees with organizations other than those funded by Verdant. Grantees have been particularly impressed by staff involvement in their programs, which has been thoughtful and judgment-free. Verdant really worked with grantees to remove the stigma associated with the work they do. Staff is very knowledgeable about what Verdant is providing as a service and they understand the connection to the various programs. Members of the community recognize that staff is doing everything possible to bring about more organizational change; and recognize that staff require more support and assistance.

A Data Collection Process and Sharing Community Needs & Statistics

There is a desire for more community data in order to better support grantees and community members. The process of gathering information for Verdant grants includes a variety of areas, all of which include data. Organizations are looking at how is Verdant publicly sharing data and information to better inform the larger community? There is an opportunity to increase the level of cooperation from larger organizations and funders in order to level the playing field for smaller BIPOC organizations with Verdant providing more community based data that supports and aligns with funding requests.



THEMES & FINDINGS: GRANTS & RESOURCES

“Believe folks when they say there is a community need.”

”

Grant Application is Easy to Navigate and Relatively Smooth Reporting Process

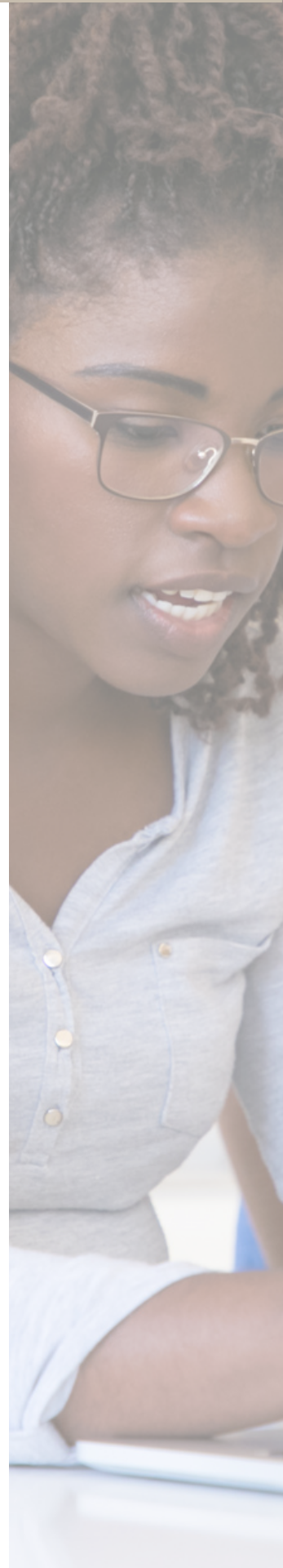
With the streamlined online-based awards process, Verdant has improved significantly in recent years. Due to varying grant demands, groups initially had difficulty reporting. The grant writing process, in addition to award formalization, was difficult on paper but is now much easier online. The grants program has an easy reporting process, and personnel can be walked through the site. Grantees benefit greatly from the personal touch that comes with the grant process, which allows them to speak with someone before submitting. Staff has always been eager to work with grantees, accommodating them throughout the process and treating any mistakes as learning opportunities rather than a hindrance. The ability to specify their own metrics within the reports appeals to grantees.

Supporting Community Organization in Capacity Building and Making Additional Funding Connections

There is opportunity for Verdant to examine multi-year sustainable funding and capacity building. This could also entail Verdant acting as a connector to other funders in order to assist grantees in obtaining funding in a simple and time-efficient manner. Grantees discuss how smaller organizations are frequently overlooked in much of the work that is done. How can Verdant provide grantees more self-sustaining ideas? Verdant can look into ways to help small organizations build capacity. Funding for general operating funds as a funder would be a step toward working to increase capacity at various levels for small organizations.

Less Rigid Granting Parameters that Allow for Grantees to Guide their Funding Needs

The current granting structure of four funding areas is extremely restrictive and gives the impression that Verdant does not want to meet communities where they are at. The regimented restrictions on grants may result in disadvantaged communities being overlooked. Feedback around Verdant "choosing" the applications pieces they wanted to fund as inequitable. It would have been preferable to approach the organization and ask what they needed the most, or if there is a specific amount that Verdant can give, let the community organization decide how to spend it.



2022 PRIORITY ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS & METRICS

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT: COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS (CHWs) (\$12,000 - \$18,000)

2022 METRIC: HIRE 6-8 CHWs

CHWs are community ambassadors representing diverse S. Snohomish communities that are knowledgeable and have the ability to engage their communities. CHWs can help advise on community needs and issues arising; and how Verdant can be a resource. Similar model Verdant already works with the current Spanish and other existing outreach (eg. Promotoras). This strategy creates an approach for outreach that is culturally relevant and centered in equity.

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS - Facilities Open House and Meet & Greets (\$5,000)

2022 METRIC: 2 SEMI-ANNUAL OPEN HOUSES

- Foster a welcoming and inclusive environment in our spaces
- Educate community participants around opportunities for use of the space
- Help communities navigate around the building
- Opportunities to coordinate & host Roundtable Discussions, Resource Fairs, Funder Fairs, etc.
- Utilize Verdant Wellness Center space as a community service hub

GRANTS AND RESOURCES COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT (Existing Resources)

2022 METRIC: DATA THAT HELPS INFORM PROGRAM and OPERATIONAL PLAN

- Gather updated data and information about the communities we serve to understand where the needs are.
- Use information on the changing demographics of the community to inform decision-making.
- A better understanding of needs will help inform how we design and improve our grants program and the resources we provide equitably.

ORGANIZATION OPERATIONAL PLAN (\$10,000)

2022 METRIC: 2023 OPERATIONAL PLAN WITH CLEAR IMPLEMENTATION GOALS & BUDGET

- A process to update shared values and goals that guides leadership on implementation goals and priorities
- Eliminate silos, duplicative work and increase coordination and communications
- Opportunity for staff to have safe space to express workplace concerns.
- Salary equity

LEADERSHIP TEAM AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING (\$10,000)

2022 METRIC: ALL TEAM ATTENDED OR RECEIVED COACHING & DEI TRAINING BY YEAR END

- Facilitate and support personal and professional development of each employee. (E.g. Staff mentoring and coaching)
- Strong interest in leadership trainings, particularly around DEI to increase effectiveness in serving diverse constituency. (Eg. Employee stipends for trainings)
- Team and relationship building
- Align staff and commission priorities to reflect the diversity of South Snohomish County.

TOTAL DEI Cost Implications: \$37,000 - \$43,000

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS (CHWs)

- CHWs are community consultants representing diverse S. Snohomish communities that are knowledgeable and have the ability to engage their communities.
- CHWs can help advise on community needs and issues arising; and how Verdant can be a resource
- Similar model Verdant already works with the current Spanish and other existing outreach (eg. Promotoras)
- Creates an approach for outreach that is culturally relevant and centered in equity

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

FACILITIES OPEN HOUSE AND MEET & GREET

- Fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment in our spaces
- Educate community participants around opportunities for use of the space
- Help communities navigate around the building
- Opportunities to coordinate and host Roundtable Discussions, Resource Fairs, Funder Fairs, etc.
- Utilizing space as a community service hub

GRANTS AND RESOURCES

COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Updated data and information about the communities we serve to understand where the needs are.
- Updated information on the changing demographics of the community
- A better understanding of needs will help inform how we design and improve our grants program and the resources we provide equitably.

ORGANIZATION

OPERATIONAL PLAN

- A process to update shared values and goals that guides leadership on implementation goals and priorities
- Eliminate silos, duplicative work and increase coordination and communications
- Opportunity for staff to have safe space to express workplace concerns.
- Salary equity

LEADERSHIP

TEAM AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

- Facilitate and support personal and professional development of each employee. (Eg. Staff mentoring and coaching)
- Strong interest in leadership trainings, particularly around DEI to increase effectiveness in serving diverse constituency. (Eg. Employee stipends for trainings)
- Team and relationship building
- Align staff and commission priorities to reflect the diversity of South Snohomish County.



2022 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Priorities

'Completion' goal, then ongoing

Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Develop Community Health Workers (CHW) Program

- Identify & recruit CHWs familiar and reflective of South Snohomish County communities
- Hire, launch and pilot CHWs

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Facilities Open House/Meet & Greets

- Spring Quarter Open House in coordination with staff and programs.
- Fall Quarter Open House in coordination with staff and programs.

GRANTS AND RESOURCES

Community Health Needs Assessment

- Collect and gather recent data and information.
- Utilize needs assessment to inform streamlined grants and resource programming

ORGANIZATION

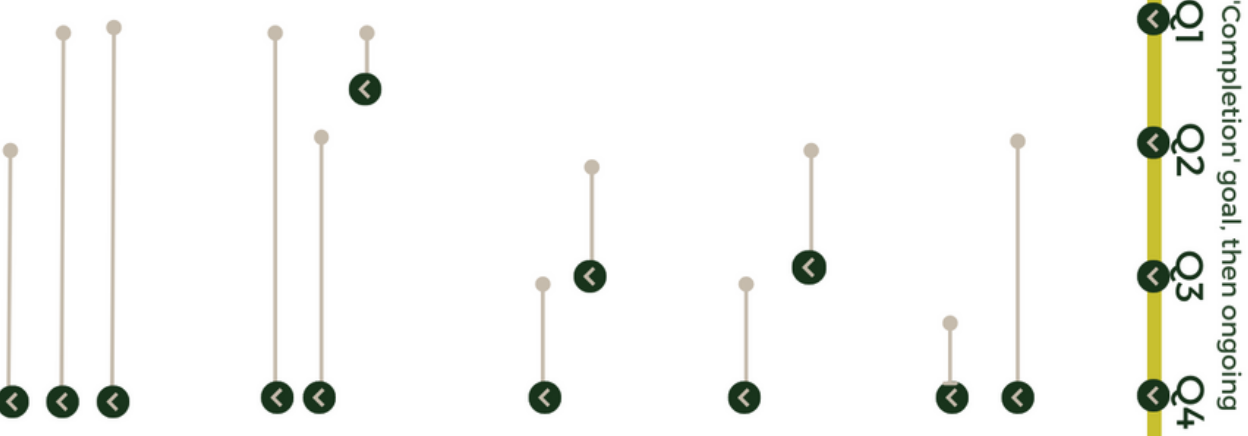
Operational Plan

- Salary equity
- Operational plan that guides leadership on implementation goals and priorities
- Foster staff safe space to express workplace concerns.

LEADERSHIP

Team and Relationship Building

- Facilitate personal/professional development of each employee.
- Training and leadership development and participation
- Align staffing goals and commissioner priorities with local changing demographics.



BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDIES

PROVIDENCE SAINT JOSEPH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FUND

EMPIRE HEALTH FOUNDATION

CASCADE VALLEY HEALTH FOUNDATION

GROUP HEALTH FOUNDATION

Providence leverages influence to invest in mutually reinforcing strategies that transform the health and well-being of our communities. These investments are data driven, effective, and focused on addressing disparities. The St. Joseph Community Partnership Fund serves as Providence's strategic grant making foundation for funding key system and regional initiatives in the areas of housing, education, disaster response and recovery, and nonprofit and community capacity building. Through the Fund we incubate and accelerate programs that create scalable impact in our communities to improve the health and wellbeing of the economically poor, utilize the strengths and diversity of our neighbors to build vibrant communities and leverage best practices and lessons learned from these investments to expand to communities across our geographical footprint.

Mission

The Fund is committed to support local organizations, residents, and community leaders to improve the health and well-being of those in need and to work toward equity for all. This philosophy motivates our team each day to find new and innovative ways to support our communities, our caregivers and especially those furthest from justice. Our investments bolster the strength and diversity of our neighbors and community organizations working tirelessly to improve access to care and advance equity.

Purpose statement

Through targeted investments and partnerships with inspiring organizations that make a measurable impact, the St. Joseph Community Partnership Fund harnesses the power of our communities to advance equity and justice for healthier communities. Rooted in a legacy of service, faith and compassion, the Fund stands in solidarity with those who are suffering and in need. We believe that by convening coalitions of dedicated community leaders and investing in their efforts to improve the lives of others, we can build a stronger, more equitable future for all.

Grants and Programs

The St. Joseph Community Partnership Fund serves as Providence's strategic grant making foundation for funding key system and regional initiatives in the areas of housing, education, disaster response and recovery, and nonprofit and community capacity building. Through the Fund we incubate and accelerate programs that create scalable impact in our communities to improve the health and wellbeing of the economically poor, utilize the strengths and diversity of our neighbors to build vibrant communities and leverage best practices and lessons learned from these investments to expand to communities across our geographical footprint.

Service Territory

National and West Coast - California and Washington - Statewide

History

Since 1986, the St. Joseph Community Partnership Fund has made investments and built partnerships in the California communities served by St. Joseph Health ministries. After 35 years, we had the opportunity to expand our focus and support programs and communities throughout Providence.

Today, the Fund represents Providence's shared commitment to solving complex challenges and building vibrant, healthy communities. We do this by building capacity and creating linkages across the communities Providence serves. This helps us maximize the direct impact of our investments and address common issues that affect people throughout our system.

Mission

Health is a fundamental human right. Empire Health Foundation boldly advances health equity in eastern Washington and beyond. As collaborators, we pursue innovative solutions and transform systems to improve health and quality of life.

Values

- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion** - We ensure our work is guided by a diverse set of people working together to empower communities to reduce health disparities.
- **Compassion** - We act with kindness and empathy as a fundamental principle.
- **Innovation** - We use bold, upstream solutions to address our region's toughest health issues.
- **Collaboration** - We encourage mutual trust and respect among partners through open dialogue and the exchange of ideas, talents and resources.
- **Measurable Impact** - We hold ourselves and our partners accountable for achieving measurable, positive impact for the communities we serve.
- **Integrity** - We work honestly and directly in alignment with our values.

Grants and Programs

- AGING SERVICES, CAPACITY BUILDING, CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION, FAMILY RESILIENCY, NATIVE AMERICAN HEALTH AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Service Territory

COUNTIES - Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Lincoln, Spokane, Adams and Whitman

TRIBES - Colville Confederated, Spokane and Kalispel

History

Empire Health Foundation is a private health conversion foundation formed in 2008 through the sale of Deaconess and Valley Medical, a nonprofit hospital system in Spokane. Stewarding philanthropic assets totaling approximately \$75.9 million, the Foundation invests in ideas and organizations that improve access, education, research and policy to result in a measurably healthier region.

We made our first grant as part of our obesity prevention initiative in 2011, and we have since grown our managed grants portfolio to about \$49 million in the 2019-20 fiscal year. Through innovative public-private collaborations and a commitment to measurable health improvements, we continue to build on the impact we have already achieved with partners both in our community and across the state.

Approach - Philanthropy 3.0

Solving today's toughest social problems relies on much more than just writing a check and hoping. Through partnerships with community leaders and nonprofit organizations, we seek to move the dial measurably and sustainably on health. We call this approach "Philanthropy 3.0." In contrast to traditional reactive grantmaking and top-down theory-of-change models, Philanthropy 3.0 is adaptive and collaborative, leverages partnerships, and is accountable for results. We don't stop at processing the grant application and completing due diligence. Our job is all about forming great entrepreneurial teams, creating new public-private joint ventures, using all our lobbying safe harbors, coaching, investing in groundbreaking lawsuits, measuring just a few key metrics with no excuses, advocating, assisting in real time when partners encounter problems, recruiting better players, calling plays in the moment, and embedding staff with key partners. At the end of the day, our responsibility is to move the needle, and we do whatever it takes to create positive, lasting, measurable health improvements in Eastern Washington.

Mission

The Cascade Valley Health Foundation mission is to support community health and services in Arlington and surrounding communities.

Strategic Plan

- Leadership Providing and/or Developing Programs
- Outreach and Education
- Partnerships and Collaborations
- Resource Development
- Marketing, Communication, and Community Engagement
- Continual Improvement and Evaluation

Grants and Programs

The Cascade Valley Health Foundation award grants to organizations performing work in the Arlington area that aligns with the Foundation's mission statement. In order to be invited to apply for grant funding, each potential applicant is asked to answer and submit responses via email to the following four inquiries. An email response can be expected within 45 days of submission. If your organization is selected to submit a grant application, instructions on the next steps will be provided.

Service Territory

Cascade Valley Health Foundation is a separate 501(c)3 nonprofit entity. Although we collaborate and partner with Stilly Valley Health Connections and other organizations on initiatives and projects, we operate independently from Public Hospital District #3, Snohomish County. The district residents of Public Hospital District #3, Snohomish County (PHD#3) are responsible for electing 5 commissioners to represent their interests for 6 year terms. The commissioners all live within the district boundaries, which includes the communities of Arlington and Darrington. Each commissioner brings their own unique background, work experience, and skills to the organization. The commissioners take their responsibilities seriously and are mindful that the strategic plan they set for the staff to follow benefits all the district residents they serve.

History

The Cascade Valley Health Foundation (formerly known as the Cascade Valley Hospital Foundation) was formed in 1998. Our all-volunteer board meets monthly to determine how best to use our experience and funds to serve our community. Our organization has funded many equipment purchases at Cascade Valley Hospital that increased safety and comfort for patients, staff and visitors. We are also proud community partners, and sponsor multiple events, scholarships and projects. In 2014, we raised and distributed over \$2.07 million to help those affected by the Oso landslide.

Strategies

Health & Wellness

Partner/fund/create/support community health and wellness programs

Connect people to resources and support services

Mental Health

Find and work with partners and experts for addressing mental health issues

Facilitate mental health programs community forums, and information sessions

Connect people to resources and support services

Drug and Alcohol Prevention

Support/promote education programs

Develop partnerships with existing organizations who are already working on these issues

connect people to resources and support services

Mission

Our mission is to transform the balance of power to ensure equity and racial justice across Washington and beyond.

Values

Group Health Foundation is committed to bringing about true equity in Washington: real change that transforms the balance of power in our state and beyond.

Approach

Equity is not possible without community power. We believe equity is possible when communities who have systemically been denied wealth and health have decision-making power over the people, policies, institutions, and structures that determine the material conditions of their daily lives. We also believe that there cannot be equity until real decision-making power is held by Black, Indigenous, and other people of color; people who are LGBTQIA+; immigrants; people with disabilities; people living on low incomes; and those who experience the compounding impacts of ableism, gender inequity, and ageism.

We believe that organizations and initiatives led by those most impacted by inequity have the best ideas and abilities for achieving equity across Washington—those who are bringing people together to build, celebrate, demand, imagine, and ensure their communities are free and thriving today and for generations to come. We are committed to ensuring that every choice we make as a foundation, including how we allocate resources, is aligned with these beliefs—our values in action.

Racial justice. Collective liberation. Joy. Freedom, justice, and an inclusive participatory democracy. The Seven Generation Principle. Accountability. Determination. and Abundance.

Group Health Foundation committed \$74 million to more than 500 organizations in our first 14 months of significant grantmaking from November 2019 through December 2020. We began collecting data on where and who we are funding to ensure we are equitably distributing dollars throughout the state. There are some instances where our information is incomplete and imperfect. This is partially because we are building our grants management system as we are making direct grants. Our team is working to refine our data collection processes to more closely reflect how communities define themselves.

All Group Health Foundation funding prioritizes Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC); transgender and gender non-conforming people, and other members of the LGBTQ+ community; persons with disabilities; immigrants and refugees; people living with low incomes; and the many who hold several of these identities. We also seek to support work by organizations who reflect these communities in places that have seen little to no philanthropic support, including rural communities, tribal lands, unincorporated areas, and smaller municipalities. We are deeply committed to resourcing organizations whose staff and board leadership reflect the people they serve. Nearly all our grants are for general operating support, to be used how an organization or fiscally sponsored project sees fit.

Grants and Programs

Systems, Power, and Action

Among our largest multiyear commitments, the Systems, Power, and Action grants invest in organizations that are working to ensure public policy, public institutions, and public funding are accountable to communities throughout Washington. In 2020, we committed \$700,000 (to be paid over three years) to each of the first 25 recipients in recognition of their advocacy and systems change work.

Community Learning Grants

Community Learning Grants help us better understand what health equity means for communities throughout the state and the approaches they are taking to advance it. Through this fund, we are resourcing “newer” and “smaller” organizations that have yet to receive flexible and multiyear funding. We also support more established BIPOC organizations, such as tribal nations and civil rights groups because they have been historically underfunded by philanthropy. More than 140 organizations received Community Learning Grants in 2019 and 2020. Grants are three-year, core-support commitments, each totaling up to \$225,000 (up to \$75,000 annually for three years).

Freedom Scholars

In 2020, we joined Marguerite Casey Foundation in welcoming the first cohort of Freedom Scholars, an initiative supporting academics who are leading abolitionist, Black, feminist, queer, radical, and anti-colonialist studies—critical fields of research that are often underfunded or ignored. The first 12 scholars have pushed our learning and forced us to expand our imagination for what transformative change means. Each person is receiving \$250,000 over two years.

Sponsorships

This fund honors the immeasurable value of connection making and community building in advancing the work for equity and justice. To date, we have granted more than \$1.5 million to 167 organizations to support community events, culturally specific gatherings, meetings, conferences, and fundraisers. Sponsorships start at \$1,000, though most organizations receive \$5,000 for an event. In exceptional cases, we have contributed \$25,000.

Equitable Response and Recovery Fund

We started this fund early in the COVID-19 pandemic to rapidly deploy emergency funding to community-based organizations throughout Washington. As 2020 wore on, and as we saw the breadth of the pandemic’s impact, experienced a record-breaking wildfire season, and the movement against anti-Black racism gained greater momentum, the Foundation committed a total of \$23 million to these community-led efforts.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

APPENDIX B: ORGANIZATION & LEADERSHIP - PROGRESS

APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Staff Survey Questions

1. How would I consider my personal growth on knowledge, awareness and practice of equity to be?
2. Equity efforts I have been working on (or hope to work on and see some change) in my role.
3. INTERNALLY, where is there opportunity for growth and improvement for our organization (eg. HR, hiring/recruitment, workplace culture, etc.) on equity, inclusion and diversity?
4. EXTERNALLY, where is there opportunity for growth and improvement for our organization (eg. program delivery, services, resource distribution, community engagement, relationships and partnerships, etc.) around equity, inclusion and diversity?
5. What are some equity related skills and training that I and other staff may be interested in receiving.

Staff Interview Questions

1. Additional feedback and suggestions/recommendations on current operations, including policies and practices supporting DEI.
2. Discuss outreach and community engagement and recommendations for creating inclusive relationships with communities.
3. What clearer roles, metrics and definitions are needed for gauging success in serving S. Snohomish diverse communities?
4. Anything else you would like to elaborate on?

Community Interview Questions

1. What feedback do you have on Verdant's grant programs, processes and community partnership opportunities?
2. What community outreach/engagement recommendations do you have for Verdant to build trusted relationships and partnerships with Snohomish communities.
3. What are opportunities for increased access to culturally responsive programming in Verdant's community spaces/facilities.
4. Anything else you would like to elaborate on. Do you have any other feedback and suggestions on community partnership best practices?

During the process of the creation of this report, Verdant Health has made strides towards its internal organizational and leadership work and recommendations.

Organization

Salary equity - In February 2022, Commissioners approved salary ranges for all Verdant employees

Eliminate silos, duplicative work and increase coordination and communications – Monthly staff meetings have been extended and new biweekly group meetings have been added for the facilities and planning programs for the community

Opportunity for staff to have a safe space to express workplace concerns - Employee handbook was updated in 2021 with the team to outline procedures for expressing concerns and grievances. The HR Consultant has met with 4 times with the team since the start of this project to develop a rapport with team members.

A process to update shared values and goals- A facilitated operational planning retreat with the Verdant team and Commissioners Distelhorst and Wilson is scheduled for June 23, 2022

Leadership

Align staff and commission priorities - A systematic analysis of themes from Community Health Needs Assessments will be presented to Commissioners at the June 2022 board meeting, there will be a board and staff study session in August 2022 and strategic planning retreat in September 2022

Facilitate and support personal and professional development for each employee - In February 2022, all employees were provided a form for tracking use of the \$1,500 allocated for their professional development. The Superintendent will meet with each employee in June 2022 to ensure that they have a plan for using their professional development dollars in 2022.

Strong interest in leadership trainings - WSHA diversity webinar series was purchased for all employees and commissioners to access. All employee and commissioners were invited to participate in the Leadership Snohomish County Step up racial equity conference

Team and relationship building - 6 monthly team building activities and potlucks have been planned and offered for all staff since October 2021, and a team building retreat was held on May 4, 2022.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Ableism

Ableism is the intentional or unintentional discrimination or oppression of individuals with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior. Source: <https://www.nccj.org/ableism>

Accessibility

The quality of being possible to get into, use, make use of.

Source: <https://www.nccj.org/ableism>

Accomplice

All accomplices are allies, but not all allies are accomplices. While an ally is willing to stand in support of a marginalized voice, risk is rarely involved. An accomplice uses the power and privilege they have to challenge the status quo, often risking their physical and social well being in the process.

Source: <https://www.diverseeducation.com/opinion/article/15104148/moving-from-ally-to-accomplice-how-far-are-you-willing-to-go-to-disrupt-racism-in-the-workplace>

Ageism

Refers to two concepts: a socially constructed way of thinking about older persons based on negative attitudes and stereotypes about aging and a tendency to structure society based on an assumption that everyone is young, thereby failing to respond appropriately to the real needs of older persons.

Source: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ageism-and-age-discrimination-fact-sheet>

Ally

An individual who takes action to support social justice and works to eliminate oppression. Also see “accomplice” in the DEI Glossary.

Bias

Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person or group compared to another; usually in a way considered unfair. Implicit bias is unconscious, explicit bias is conscious.

Bigotry

The fact of having and expressing strong, unreasonable beliefs and disliking other people who have different beliefs or a different way of life.

Source: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/bigotry>

BIPOC

An acronym for Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/article/what-is-bipoc.html>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Cisgender

A term used to describe people whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth. Often abbreviated to cis.

Source: <https://www.catalyst.org/2019/05/30/12-diversity-inclusion-terms-you-need-to-know/>

Class

Refers to people's socio-economic status, based on factors such as wealth, occupation, education, income etc.

Classism

Differential treatment based on social class or perceived social class. Classism is the systematic oppression of subordinated class groups to advantage and strengthen the dominant class groups. It's the systematic assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on social class.

Source: <https://classism.org/about-class/what-is-classism/>

Culture

Learned and shared values, beliefs, languages, and customs of a social group.

D&I

Acronym for Diversity & Inclusion

DEI

Acronym for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

DEIA

Acronym for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

DIB

Acronym for Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging

Disability

Having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This includes people who have a record of such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability.

Source: <https://www.nccj.org/ableism>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Discrimination

Prejudiced treatment of a person on the basis of the social groups to which they belong, and stereotypes about those groups. When committed by an individual, discrimination can be broken down into two types: traditional discrimination (openly negative treatment) and modern discrimination (subtle negative treatment).

Diversity

Efforts to increase representation of different types of identities within communities (e.g., demographics, sexuality, religion, etc.)

Emotional Tax

The combination of being on guard to protect against bias, feeling different at work because of gender, race, and/or ethnicity, and the associated effects on health, well-being, and ability to thrive at work.

Source: <https://www.catalyst.org/2019/05/30/12-diversity-inclusion-terms-you-need-to-know/>

Empowerment

The state of being empowered to do something: the power, right, or authority to do something.

Source: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/empowerment>

Equity

Critically examining systems to identify biases that prevent equal access and opportunity to individuals.

Ethnicity

A socially or politically constructed group based on cultural criteria, such as language, customs, and shared history.

Feminism

The belief that all genders have equal rights and opportunities.

Source: <https://iwda.org.au/learn/what-is-feminism/>

Gender

Social constructed categories of masculinity/manhood and femininity and womanhood.

Heterosexism

The assumption that heterosexuality is the social and cultural norm as well as the prejudiced belief that heterosexuals, or “straight” people, are socially and culturally superior to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Two-Spirit and queer (LGBTQQ) people.

Source: <https://rainbowresourcecentre.org/files/12-11-Heterosexism.pdf>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Homophobia

The irrational fear, dislike, hatred, aversion, intolerance, and ignorance of homosexuality and of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, Two Spirit and queer (LGBTQ) individuals.

Source: <https://rainbowresourcecentre.org/files/16-12-Homophobia.pdf>

Inclusion

Valuing differences as a source of strength, innovation, and performance; creating belonging

Indigenous

Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

Source: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/fp=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169

Institutional Racism

A pattern of social institutions—such as governmental organizations, schools, banks, and courts of law—giving negative treatment to a group of people based on their race.

Intent Vs. Impact

Our intentions (what we want or hope to do) don't always align with what we say or do which can impact how others receive what one says and does. INTENT Refers to what you hope or want to do when choosing to perform an action. IMPACT Refers to the reality (e.g. results) of your actions/ behaviors. The resulting impact may not always align with what you intended. Owning the impact: When one's impact is being called into question, especially if the action is perpetuating oppression, it is important to recognize the action is being called into question not the person/overall character.

Source: <https://everydayfeminism.com/2013/07/intentions-dont-really-matter/>

Intersectionality

The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Source: <https://aapf.org/kimberle-crenshaw>

JEDI

Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Justice

Presence of systems and supports (e.g. policies, practices, norms) that achieve and sustain fair treatment, equitable opportunities, and outcomes for people of all races. Systematic, proactive reinforcement.

Source: <http://www.theinclusionsolution.me/beyond-the-rhetoric-centering-justice-anti-racism-in-our-dei-strategy-our-approach/>

Latine

A gender-neutral form of the word Latino, created by gender non-binary and feminist communities in Spanish-speaking countries.

Source: <https://elcentro.colostate.edu/about/why-latinx/>

Latinx

The gender-neutral alternative to Latina or Latino. It is a term used to describe a diverse group of people who have roots in Latin America

Source: <https://elcentro.colostate.edu/about/why-latinx/>

LGBTQIA+

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, queer/questioning, intersex, and allied/asexual/aromantic/agender.

Source: <https://lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary>

Marginalization

To relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group

Source: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/marginalize>

Micro-inequity

Apparently small events which are often ephemeral and hard-to-prove, events which are covert, often unintentional, frequently unrecognized by the perpetrator, which occur wherever people are perceived to be different- Mary Rowe, MIT.

Source: <https://www.lewissilkin.com/en/insights/mansplaining-micro-inequities-and-managers>

Microaggression

The everyday slights, indignities, put downs and insults that people of color, women, LGBT populations or those who are marginalized experience in their day-to-day interactions with people.

Source: <https://www.vox.com/2015/2/16/8031073/what-are-microaggressions>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Neurodiversity

Noun: The concept that there is great diversity in how people's brains are wired and work, and that neurological differences should be valued in the same way we value any other human variation.

Source: <https://www.catalyst.org/2019/05/30/12-diversity-inclusion-terms-you-need-to-know/>

Non-binary

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

Source: <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/about-us/news/10-ways-step-ally-non-binary-people>

OMAD

Acronym referring to UW's Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity.

Source: <https://www.washington.edu/omad/>

Oppression

Systemic devaluing, undermining, marginalizing and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the privileged norm; when some people are denied something of value, while others have ready access.

Pansexuality

The romantic, emotional, and/or sexual attraction to people regardless of their gender.

Source: <https://www.webmd.com/sex/pansexuality-what-it-means>

Performative Allyship

When an individual or group of power/majority/privilege (e.g., white, male, abled, unqueer, etc) loudly profess(es) their actions in the name of 'allyship,' while actively conducting harm to, taking focus away from, and generally being unhelpful towards the group they claim to support, often to receive praise and attention, without taking critical action to dismantle the systems of harm.

Source: <https://www.selfdefined.app/definitions/performative-allyship/>

POC

Acronym referring to a Person of Color.

Positionality

Social identities in relation to power, which influences the way we understand the world and our interactions with others.

Sources: <https://lsa.umich.edu/social-solutions/news-events/news/insights-and-solutions/infographics/intersectionality--positionality--and-privilege.html>

<https://indigenousinitiatives.ctlt.ubc.ca/classroom-climate/positionality-and-intersectionality/>

<https://foster.uw.edu/about-foster-school/fostering-diversity/dei-glossary/>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Prejudice

'Pre-judgement' Personal bias for or against anything, all humans have bias and prejudice.

Privilege

Systemic favoring, enriching, valuing, validating and including of certain social identities over others. Individuals cannot 'opt out' of systems of privilege; rather these systems are inherent to the society in which we live.

Race

A socially or politically constructed group based on perceived differences in physical characteristics.

Racism

Belief that some races of people are better than others.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/10/us/merriam-webster-racism-definition.html>

Sexual Orientation

A concept referring to sexual desire and preference for emotional and sexual relationships with others based on their sex/gender; often implies that sexual object choice is an essential in-born characteristic, so may be problematic to some.

Social Justice

Active engagement toward equity and inclusion that addresses issues of institutional, structural, and environmental inequity, power, and privilege.

Stereotypes

Assumptions we make about people on the basis of the social groups to which they belong

Systemic Racism

(AKA structural racism or institutional racism) Systems and structures that have procedures or processes that disadvantage African Americans, Indigenous people, Latinx people, and people of color.

Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/06/15/systemic-racism-what-does-mean/5343549002/>

Tolerance

The attitude of someone who is willing to accept someone else's beliefs, way of life, etc. without criticizing them even if they disagree with them.

Source: <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/us/dictionary/american/tolerance>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Transgender

People whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be at birth. “Trans” is often used as shorthand for transgender.

Source: <https://transequality.org/issues/resources/frequently-asked-questions-about-transgender-people>

UDS

Acronym referring to Foster Undergraduate Diversity Services

White Privilege

A concept that highlights the unfair societal advantages that white people have over non-white people. It is something that is pervasive throughout society and exists in all of the major systems and institutions that operate in society, as well as on an interpersonal level.

Source: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-white-privilege-5070460>

Workplace Inclusion

Noun: An atmosphere where all employees belong, contribute, and can thrive. Requires deliberate and intentional action.

Source: <https://www.catalyst.org/2019/05/30/12-diversity-inclusion-terms-you-need-to-know/>

YEOC

Acronym for Foster's High School Outreach program, Young Executives of Color.

Source: <https://foster.uw.edu/academics/degree-programs/undergraduate-programs/diversity-services/young-executives-of-color-yeoc/>