



**Massachusetts – Rhode Island Fund Provides over \$900,000
For Innovative Civil Rights Work**

**Grants Will Support Community-Legal
Partnerships in Massachusetts and Rhode Island**

The Funders' Collaborative for Racial Justice Innovation is pleased to announce that the **Massachusetts – Rhode Island Fund** has approved over \$900,000 in 2-year grants to 9 organizations based in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The pool of grantees reflects the Massachusetts – Rhode Island Fund's interest in bringing together a diverse set of organizations across geographic and issue areas that are using community organizing and innovative community-based legal strategies to address structural racism. These organizations demonstrated the most compelling and effective proposed strategies and partnerships; had a proven track record in the racial justice field; and had the strongest potential to add value to the field.

The Funders' Collaborative for Racial Justice Innovation was launched in 2003 by leading foundations and individuals to support innovative and community-focused civil rights work. The projects supported by the Collaborative address a range of issues faced by immigrant and minority communities, including juvenile and criminal justice, housing discrimination, and wage and workplace protection. They all have deep connections to local communities and constituencies, and will focus on both legal and non-legal means of addressing economic and social challenges faced by members of their communities.

The Collaborative has a national fund which accepts proposals nationally, as well as state funds to support civil rights work in California, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Rhode Island. The Massachusetts – Rhode Island Fund is made up of donors from the Boston Foundation, the Foley, Hoag Foundation, Hyams Foundation, the Theodore Edson Parker Foundation, the Rhode Island Foundation, and the Schott Foundation for Public Education.

Grant Awards

1. **Alternatives for Community & Environment** – to addresses public transportation service and spending, equitable development without displacement, and environmental justice policies affecting low-income communities of color in Roxbury through advocacy, community organizing, education and research.
2. **Direct Action for Rights and Equality** - to address and close the educational gap between white and students of color in Rhode Island with community organizing, research, trainings and policy advocacy.
3. **Greater Boston Legal Services** - to ensure low-income Asian residents in Boston’s Chinatown participate in the decision-making process concerning housing and zoning issues affecting their community.
4. **Institute for Responsive Education (for the Boston Parent Organizing Network)** – to strengthen the capacity of bilingual parents in Boston to organize and advocate for equal access to education for children with disabilities.
5. **Massachusetts Family Child Care Workers Association*** - to organize and mobilize low-wage people of color and immigrant workers in the family child care industry to ensure fair labor practices through advocacy, capacity building, education, and leadership development.
6. **Massachusetts Voter Education Network** - to increase the democratic participation of communities of color in city and state politics in the Greater Boston in the 2004 election on beyond.
7. **Merrimack Valley Project** - to develop leadership skills among low-wage immigrant workers to combat labor exploitation (focusing on African, Brazilian, Latino, and Southeast Asians) in the Merrimack Valley area.
8. **Rhode Island Legal Services** - to increase the involvement of parents in the development of school reform initiatives to ensure equal access to education for students of color in Providence’s public schools.
9. **Urban Revival** (d.b.a. City Life/Vida Urbana) - to limit the unintended discriminatory effects of neighborhood revitalization and the for-profit housing market in Boston in communities of color.

* Fiscal Sponsor: American Institute for Social Justice