



STRATEGIC VISION AND PLAN

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To learn more about how we can partner together, please visit us at evanstonforever.org, or call us at 847.492.0990

OUR CHARGE:

Equity, Vibrance, and Abundance for All.

ECF is on a mission to address the gap in opportunity and resources in Evanston through equitable leadership, strategic grant-making, and creating partnerships that will strengthen the common good.

OUR GUIDING PHILOSOPHY:

ECF's work is driven by the spirit of "Ubuntu"

a Nguni Bantu term meaning "I am because we are." The spirit of Ubuntu is reflected in our core belief that the wellbeing of everyone in Evanston is interconnected. We rise and fall together. This means that all of us--ECF, our donors, the organizations we fund, and the people supported by these organizations--have a responsibility to create the equitable and bright future we know to be possible.

OUR VISION:

Our vision for Evanston is that our community is grounded in the principles of Ubuntu, and undoubtedly empowered to take meaningful action that will strengthen the community now, forever, and for everyone. In the spirit of Ubuntu, we strive for an Evanston where...

- All voices are heard, honored, and respected
- All children can pursue their passions
- All families can thrive
- There is a vibrant nonprofit community

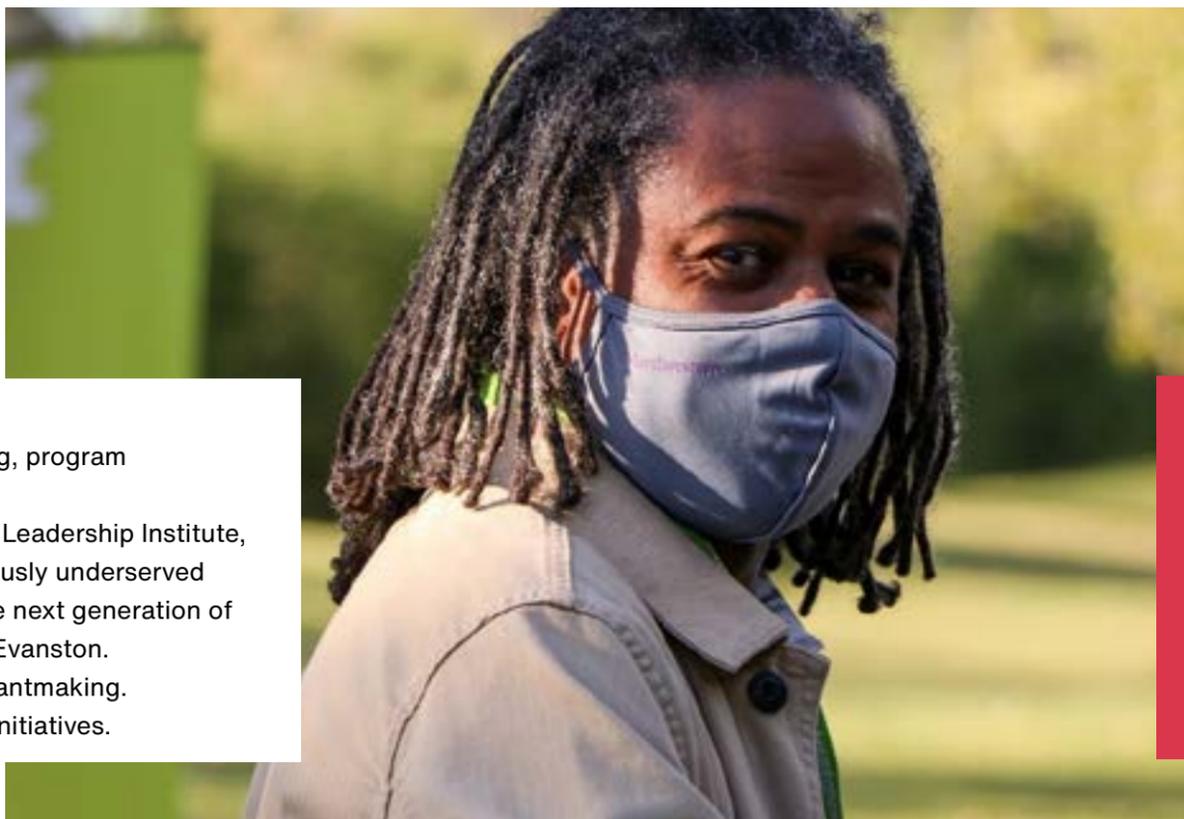
EVANSTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION STRATEGIC PILLARS

ELEVATE VOICES

Developing an equitable community in Evanston is dependent upon the elevation of leaders and voices from across the entire community. ECF must be equitable and inclusive in our programming and grantmaking, and expand our leadership, outreach, advocacy, and educational offerings, especially to communities who have been historically excluded. Here's how we'll do it:

Key Initiatives

- Raise up underrepresented voices in our community listening, program development, advocacy, and grantmaking.
- Expand our signature program – Leadership Evanston – to a Leadership Institute, with a focus on new models of community leadership, previously underserved audiences including youth and people of color, preparing the next generation of knowledgeable, concerned, active citizen leadership within Evanston.
- Prioritize the repair of barriers to equity and justice in our grantmaking.
- Support community advocacy efforts and collective impact initiatives.



BUILD JUSTICE AND RESILIENCY

The pandemic made apparent the vast disparities in resources and opportunities existing in Evanston. And, while in some ways the initial crisis is past, we know that many of these disparities have existed for generations, and many Evanston families continue to struggle. We need to bolster all in our community to face whatever challenges lie ahead. Here's how we'll take it a step further:

Key Initiatives

- Build and collaborate on programs that will specifically improve family economic stability in communities of color, including supporting and expanding reparations work in Evanston.
- Play a leadership role in creating and funding a permanent guaranteed basic income program in Evanston.
- Relocate ECF's offices to a community where we can serve as an economic anchor, including partnering with local businesses owned by women and people of color.
- Play a leadership role in the Savings for Success childhood education savings program.

CONNECT AND STRENGTHEN

Non-profit organizations are the heart and soul of Evanston. A strong, vibrant, and collaborative non-profit sector is absolutely crucial to build an equitable and healthy community, and to sustaining a strong quality of life. Here's what we will do to help achieve this:

Key Initiatives

- Spearhead opportunities for shared operations and efficiencies among Evanston nonprofits, empowering organizations to more strongly fulfill their missions.
- Expand the ECF nonprofit learning series to better meet current and future needs, including managing through transition, stabilizing the nonprofit workforce, and building a just and equitable nonprofit sector.
- Support nonprofits in building the capacity to effectively serve the Evanston community.

EVOLVE ECF

As Evanston's Community Foundation, we play a unique role in the non-profit ecosystem: we are a connector of organizations with sometimes disparate missions, we are called upon to fill gaps in moments of crisis, and we address the collective needs of our entire community. To fulfill this calling, we need ECF to be financially strong and a model for what a community-driven organization rooted in justice is all about. Here's what we will do to secure this commitment:

Our Commitments

- We will foster an internal culture of racial justice and belonging.
- We will hold ourselves accountable for living our values of justice, equity, and inclusion in all our partnership, grant-making, and programming.
- We will secure the resources to position ECF to more strongly respond to community needs and emergencies.

