

# GREATER LOUISVILLE RACIAL EQUITY PLEDGE

## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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# PLEDGE UPDATE

In Spring 2021, Greater Louisville Inc. launched Greater Louisville's Racial Equity Pledge in response to the racial justice movement of 2020 which created an understanding of the business community's role in advancing inclusive economic development in the community. In coordination with the inclusion workstream of GLI's Business Council to End Racism and workstream leader Conrad Daniels, GLI created a pledge that was meant to drive action and tangible results.

The pledge has more than **230 signers from more than 170 companies**, made up of top business leaders from 16 different industries. It outlines five pillars that businesses agree to take action upon, which include instituting formal DE&I policies, developing and empowering diverse talent, supporting diverse-owned businesses through equitable vendor spending, championing transparency, and building empathy through mentorship.

One year after its launch, GLI wants to gauge progress and highlight organizations that are going above and beyond their original commitment to the five pillars to encourage others to do more and share their progress. Below are five testimonials that give a snapshot of some of the amazing work being done in the community. There is much work still to do and many other companies making great progress. We share these profiles as a way to generate new ideas or new partnerships within the community to keep making progress towards our goal of economic equity.



**Dana Johnson**  
Senior Director of Diversity  
Greater Louisville Inc.



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# FRAZIER HISTORY MUSEUM

The Frazier History Museum opened in 2004 initially as an arms museum. Since then, it has evolved many times over the years and now focuses on showcasing the history and culture of Kentucky. Since the beginning president and CEO, Andy Treinen, has wanted the museum to “mean more to more people every day.”

The Frazier was eager to take action to ensure that as they share the history and unique culture of the Commonwealth, they are representing all people and all parts of that history. The Museum is located on West Main Street, one block away from Ninth Street – the historic dividing line between predominantly Black West Louisville and the Downtown Business District.

“We didn't sign the racial equity pledge to have our name on a list. We signed it to hold ourselves accountable in doing the important work to move ourselves forward as an organization -- and to be part of an effort to make our community a better place,” said Treinen.

While the Frazier was involved in DE&I before signing the pledge and before the events of 2020, their work has continued to grow. In 2015 they launched their [Bridging the Divide](#), a series of regular community conversations meant to discuss the needs of surrounding neighborhoods and the Ninth Street Divide. These conversations led to a year-long exhibit at the Frazier called “West of Ninth,” which showcased the neighborhoods and voices of West Louisville communities and brought in a brand-new audience who felt represented in the museum.

Throughout the process, the Frazier has also worked internally to create an inclusive and welcoming environment. They gleaned insights from GLI's Racial Equity Pledge on instituting formal DE&I policies and developing diverse talent. In 2021 they launched a formal diversity, equity, access, and inclusion committee and launched a [webpage](#) to showcase their commitment to equity. They have prioritized community outreach and partnerships to ensure they are curating inclusive content and giving diverse audiences access to the museum. They recently created a partnership with Jefferson Community and Technical College to bring students to the museum and share job postings with students with certain areas of interest.

# FROST BROWN TODD



Frost Brown Todd is a full-service law firm with more than 500 lawyers operating in 14 markets across eight states and Washington, D.C. FBT has had a formal DE&I program for 16 years but has continued to build out its programming. In early 2022, they hired Chris Johnson as Chief Diversity Officer to develop and implement diversity action plans and help leaders across the firm conceptualize and develop policies and practices that leverage DEI analytics to advance inclusivity and diverse representation.

“I appreciate the sentiment behind the pledge, but more than that, I recognize how important it is to publicly, broadly, and boldly underscore the importance of being intentional about ensuring Louisville is the equitable, diverse and inclusive community we should all want it to be. Similarly, Frost Brown Todd believes that by signing this pledge—and all of the work that has evolved because of it—we can too inspire others to do the same and be inspired by others to continue to do more,” said Johnson.

As the largest law firm in Louisville and the state of Kentucky, FBT wanted to be an example for other firms and businesses and recognized GLI’s Racial Equity Pledge as another opportunity to grow their work and hold themselves accountable.



FBT is taking action in many of the pillars of the pledge and has gone beyond its scope. They have rolled out a formal DE&I policy and mandatory bias training for all new employees during the onboarding process. They have also tied DE&I to employee compensation, incorporating participation in DE&I initiatives and programming as part of the annual review process.

In addition to supporting Black talent, they are investing in up-and-coming minority talent. Because the legal field is highly specialized and requires years of education, it has historically lacked diversity. FBT recognized that in order to recruit more diverse talent, they have to invest in minority students from the beginning and remove early barriers. They have awarded a total of \$70,000 over five years to more than 30 students. These scholarships are awarded to promising students with an interest in the legal field and there are plans to increase their annual budget for scholarships in 2023.

Transparency has also become a top priority since signing the pledge. FBT has invested in a new data platform to track representation and metrics around DE&I to ensure their workforce and leadership are diverse and representative of the community. Since 2019, they have increased the number of underrepresented individuals that are promoted to equity membership, their highest position, by 12.5 percent and their executive committee is made up of 33.3% diverse representation.

“Advancing inclusion, diversity, equity, and belonging is not just for show at Frost Brown Todd. We live it every day, both within the firm and in our community. That’s why we value a partner like GLI providing us another opportunity to learn, grow, and do our part to make Louisville a better place to live and work,” said Jennifer Barber, Frost Brown Todd Louisville Partner in Charge.

# LOUISVILLE MSD



Louisville's Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) was formally created in 1946 and is the city's public sewage and waste utility. MSD's mission is to provide quality wastewater, stormwater, and flood protection services, and to protect public health and safety through sustainable solutions, fiscal stewardship, and strategic partnerships. Among their seven core values are equity and justice, which underscore their commitment to equity internally and within the community.

Equity has been a priority for MSD for many years and GLI's Racial Equity Pledge reinforced the work they were already doing and presented an opportunity to collaborate with other businesses and organizations looking to take action.

"At MSD we are committed to racial equity, and have demonstrated this daily through several on-going initiatives, such as our supplier diversity and community benefits programs. GLI's Racial Equity Pledge is another avenue for MSD to demonstrate that economic inclusion and racial equity are critical to the success of our community," said Tony Parrott, CEO of MSD.

In 2020, Kellie Watson joined MSD as Equity and Compliance Officer and implemented a framework for both internal and external DE&I programming. A primary goal was to intertwine DE&I with everything within the organization and not have it be a stand-alone or add-on.

MSD continues to be a community leader and example in procurement. They spend millions of dollars each year on capital projects and require contractors to meet specific targets for minority representation among subcontractors. In the past five years, MSD has spent more than \$157 million buying goods and services from minorities and women and are projected to have created more than 2,000 jobs. In June of 2020, they implemented new supplier diversity goals for construction-related projects valued at \$150,000 or more and have committed to contract at least 18 percent of those projects with qualified African American vendors. Tony Parrott also co-chairs Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer's Minority Procurement Task Force.

MSD is investing in Black talent and since signing GLI's pledge has rolled out an apprenticeship program where employees take classes at JCTC and also have an assigned mentor within the company to help them learn new skills and move up within the organization. In addition, transparency continues to be a priority. MSD proudly shares that its board make-up is 50% diverse and they have a racially and gender-diverse leadership team.



# PRESENTATION ACADEMY



Founded in 1831, Presentation Academy is an all-girls Catholic high school located in Downtown Louisville. The college preparatory school is rooted in and committed to its urban neighborhood, so diversity and inclusion have always been core values for the school. They signed GLI's Racial Equity pledge because it supported much of the work they were already doing and also generated ideas for how they can do more within the school and the community. As an educational institution, Presentation believes it is critical to teach young women from an early age to be inclusive, accepting, and compassionate because they are the future of our community.

"For over 190 years Presentation Academy has been dedicated to making sure that every young women in our community, no matter their socioeconomic, racial or faith background, has access to a high-quality education," said Laura Dills, president of Presentation Academy. "Every staff and faculty member of our college preparatory school welcomes students each year and provides our entire student body the tools they need to become global citizens. We are implementing initiatives that support diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of our efforts, and we are dedicated to the pledge we signed over a year ago."



Since signing the pledge, transparency around diverse representation has become a top priority. Presentation's student population is the most diverse of any private high school in Louisville with 39 percent minority students. They recently added four women of color to their board of directors, which is critical to incorporating broader views and experiences in the leadership of the school and allowing their students to see leaders who look like them. Diversifying their faculty and staff remains a priority but is more challenging given workforce shortages and a lack of diversity in the education field. The school does recognize a diverse group of women in the community as leaders and mentors to the students through its annual Tower Awards for Women Leaders program.

Each year, Presentation awards over 40 needs-based and merit-based scholarships to students and these awarded with an equity lens to ensure families who want to send their child to Presentation have the opportunity regardless of their ability to pay. Over the last few years, the school also launched a Black Student Union to connect minority students with mentors in the community. These mentors provide guidance and support and also help fundraise for additional scholarships for underrepresented students.

Finally, as Presentation rolled out formal DE&I policies, they also reviewed their existing policies that may hinder a welcoming and inclusive environment. They recently amended their student dress code to take out antiquated policies limiting hair colors and sock colors in recognition that it did not provide a distraction from learning and would instead hinder students' authenticity.

# TRILOGY HEALTH SERVICES



Trilogy Health Services is headquartered in Louisville and operates senior living communities across the Midwest. Before signing GLI's Racial Equity Pledge, Trilogy formed their DE&I department and hired Candice Carter as director of diversity, equity, and inclusion to roll out internal and external programming with insights from the University of Louisville, and esteemed local DE&I consultant, Al Cornish.

"At Trilogy, we're proud to offer equitable career paths that embrace each of our employees' unique backgrounds and perspectives," said Leigh Ann Barney, Trilogy Health Services president and CEO.

Trilogy started its work with a series of internal training for its leadership and staff which continue to grow. In the past year, they have also formed and launched five employee resource groups (ERGs) which are for veterans, multicultural, LGBTQ+, Women in leadership, and emotional well-being. They have plans to add another ERG in early 2023. The ERGs meet regularly to discuss a variety of topics and also generate ways to engage colleagues in their work, which has ranged from cultural celebrations to a multicultural cookbook and outreach to feed into their apprenticeship and internship program.

In addition to formal groups, Trilogy's leadership recognized it was critical that their employees feel comfortable bringing their authentic selves to work. They adjusted their employee handbook grooming policy and now allow staff to show tattoos and have any hair color they choose. This has not only helped with employee retention and hiring but has also been a welcome addition for residents to relate more to the people who take care of them.

Transparency is one principle of GLI's Racial Equity Pledge that Trilogy was particularly interested in, however, due to data limitations they had not been previously tracking staff, residents, or leadership diversity. They have since rolled out new processes and protocols to capture data and created a new dashboard for hiring diversity and compensation equity.

Trilogy continues to explore how it can contribute to advancing economic equity through diversifying vendor spending and with new data capabilities will be able to track and improve those metrics.



# I PLEDGE...

Greater Louisville's Racial Equity Pledge challenges the region's business community to build a more inclusive economy based on equal opportunity, advancing racial equity, and addressing the damage caused by systemic racism. By signing this pledge, we commit to pursuing inclusivity and equality for underrepresented and marginalized community groups and agree to increase efforts and transparency around conscious efforts to attack poverty, narrow the racial wealth gap, and increase equity for Louisville residents.

We recognize that living up to this pledge requires a necessary and comprehensive overhaul of the status quo, however, we are ready to seize the opportunity to create sustainable solutions over a multi-year horizon that will position Louisville as a leader in this work.

Signing this pledge is an agreement to pursue change intentionally and consistently within our businesses and the broader community. As business leaders, our time in history is now and our action matters, now more than ever. We pledge to make a difference by working toward minority business economic inclusion and actively supporting underrepresented and marginalized businesses and talent.

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Signature

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Printed Name | Company