

# We Got This TX Strategic Plan

## **Executive Summary**

On June 15, 2021, We Got This TX became an official nonprofit organization certified by the state of Texas. We Got This TX is organized exclusively for the purpose and goals of supporting, training, and making opportunities for progressive Black, Indigenous, and women of color (BIWOC) to engage with & work in the Texas legislative process. In August of 2021 the Board of We Got This TX approved bylaws to establish the internal rules, policies, and procedures to operate the organization. This Strategic Plan will serve as a guide to prioritize the organization program expansions and operations. The Board of Directors will meet annually to review implementation of this Strategic Plan and refine the organization's goals, strategies, and objectives as needed. The Board of Directors will provide guidance to staff as needed and during annual Strategic Plan reviews. The Board of Directors, and the Executive Director as applicable, are responsible for tracking implementation of the Strategic Plan. This plan supports our mission and is a call to action for We Got This TX, its Board, and staff as well as its allies, partners, and stakeholders. References and commitments made throughout this document reflect the expectations that we as an organization, its Board, and staff will strive to embody and enact.

## **Mission**

We Got This TX is on a mission to train, support, & make opportunities for progressive BIWOC to engage with & work in the Texas legislative process.

## **Vision**

We are fiercely committed to sparking transformative change to bring about equitable representation of progressive BIWOC in civic life and the Texas legislative process.

## **Guiding Beliefs**

We endeavor to create a pipeline of opportunity because we believe that the progressive BIWOC who lead, serve, and organize our communities deserve equitable representation in every aspect of the Texas legislative process. Our lived experience is expertise that belongs in the halls of power.

## **Theory of Change Statement**

We know that if progressive BIWOC have equitable representation in all aspects of the Texas legislative process, then the priorities of Texas elected leaders are more likely to reflect the needs and values of our communities.

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## **Values**

We Got This TX is a nonpartisan organization that operates in the political realm. We Got This TX is guided by a progressive set of values. When we say progressive, this does not mean that we are aligned with any political party but rather that our values compel us to uproot systemic oppression and plant the seeds of progress that will flourish into equitable representation of BIWOC in the Texas legislative process. Although our work is rooted in these values, We Got This TX does not take positions on individual issues, policies, or candidates. However, We Got This TX will support the equitable representation and civic engagement of BIWOC in Texas. We will encourage them to speak truth to power by engaging in the legislative process and advocating or lobbying for issues that are important to them. We firmly believe that it is the role of We Got This TX to provide Black, Indigenous, and women of color with the tools to participate in civic life and engage in the Texas legislative process so that they can voice their priorities in their own words and on their own terms.

## **Anti-Racism Statement**

We Got This TX condemns racism and white supremacy in all of its forms; individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural. In all of our work we shall seek to subvert, dismantle, and eradicate practices which perpetuate racism and white supremacy, and the harms that they cause. In line with our commitment to anti-racist practice, We Got This TX is devoted to unlearning, resisting, and combatting racist and white-supremacist practices and learning, implementing, and embodying practices that encourage respect for diversity, inclusion, justice, equality, and equity of opportunities and treatment in all things. We Got This TX recognizes that we cannot advance our mission to serve BIWOC without continuously looking inward with humility and accountability to ensure that we are realizing our values each and every day of our journey toward anti-racist practice, and commit to doing so as to act to effect the changes that we wish to see in society.

As a multi-racial and ethnic coalition, we will both consciously and intentionally work to critically name, interrogate, and resist assumptions, beliefs, and biases in our practices which promote prejudice and discrimination that would divide us and jeopardize our cohesion such as: respectability politics, colorism, Islamophobia, xenophobia, anti-Blackness, anti-Asian and anti-Latino/Hispanic sentiment amongst others. Through these actions, We Got This TX reaffirms our commitment to strengthening our solidarity and building upon our collective civic power.

## **Inclusion Statement**

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At We Got This TX we acknowledge and honor the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals. We are devoted to advancing inclusion, fairness, equality, equity, and identifying and eliminating exclusionary practices in our organization and its practices. We strive to create and maintain a culture that is inclusive for all, embraces and respects intersectionality, diversity, differences, traditions, heritages, and experiences.

We Got This TX is an organization for all Black, Indigenous, & women of color, both cis and trans, as well as gender expansive and non-binary people who are comfortable in a space that centers the experiences of women. We are committed to fostering an environment which meaningfully includes and uplifts our participants who identify as LGBTQIA2S+ and as persons with disabilities.

## **Organizational Goals, Objectives, and Strategies**

Our overarching goal is to achieve equitable representation of Black, Indigenous, and women of color in civic life and the Texas legislative process. Organizational goals are related to accomplishing this and expanding our services statewide. We will actualize this goal by pursuing activities that:

1. Bridge the representation gap of Black, Indigenous, and women of color in the Texas legislative process.
2. Build and harness the collective civic power of Black, Indigenous, and women of color in Texas.
3. Break down systemic barriers to the civic participation and engagement in the Texas legislative process that affect Black, Indigenous, and women of color in Texas.

### **Organizational Objective 1: Bridging the representation gap of Black, Indigenous, and women of color in the Texas legislative process.**

Strategy 1: Increasing the visibility of progressive BIWOC who are already working in and engaging with the Texas legislative process.

Activity 1: Featuring stories of progressive BIWOC who work or engage in the Texas legislative process in the Herstory Archive. We will feature 20 stories by 2025 and a total of at least 100 stories by 2032. The program was rolled out in the Fall of 2021. We project that this program will generate revenue from grants, corporate and other institutional sponsorships, as well as individual giving.

Activity 2: Hosting our Raise Your Voice Blog featuring progressive BIWOC's opinion pieces highlighting current issues in the Texas legislature or videos/written copies of their testifying at the legislature to be featured. We will feature 18 pieces by 2025 and a total of at least 75 pieces by 2032. The program was rolled out in the Fall of 2021. We project that this program will generate revenue from grants, corporate and other institutional sponsorships, as well as individual giving.

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Activity 3: Hosting a series of panels featuring progressive BIWOC who are making positive change through the Texas legislative process. We will host 4 panels by 2025 and a total of 18 panels by 2032. We intend to roll out the program no later than the Spring of 2023. We project that this program will be a source of revenue through purchase of admission, sponsorships, and individual giving.

Activity 4: Providing networking opportunities through our mentorship program. We will provide mentorship to 24 progressive BIWOC between 2022-2025. We will provide mentorship to 200 progressive BIWOC in Texas by 2032. We intend to roll out the mentorship program by no later than the Fall of 2023. We project that funding for this program will come from corporate and other institutional sponsorships.

Strategy 2: Addressing challenges that disproportionately affect BIWOC and prevent our participation in the Texas legislative process.

Activity 1: Funding legislative fellowships for low-income & working class progressive BIWOC through our We Got This TX Fellowships. Financing 6 fellows by the end of 2025. Financing 44 fellows by 2032. We intend to roll out the program no later than in the Fall of 2024. We project that funding for this program will come from corporate and other institutional sponsorships, as well as individual giving.

Activity 2: Creating opportunities for educational advancement and professional development by providing Our Time is Now scholarships to support BIWOC in accessing certificates, undergraduate, or master's degrees focusing on public policy and government. We will provide at least 1 partial tuition scholarship by 2025. We will provide at least an additional 2 full-tuition scholarships by 2029. We will provide at least an additional 4 full-tuition scholarships by 2032. We project that funding for this program will come from corporate and other institutional sponsorships, as well as individual giving.

## **Organizational Objective 2: Building and harnessing the collective civic power of Black, Indigenous, and women of color in Texas.**

Strategy 1: Increasing engagement among BIWOC in Texas by providing tools and training to demystify civic participation and the Texas legislative process.

Activity 1: Providing training to demystify the Texas legislative process through a civic activism and legislative leadership development program called It's Our House. We will provide training to at least 400 progressive BIWOC in Texas between 2023-2025 and over 1,250 BIWOC in Texas by 2032. We intend to roll out the program no later than the

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Spring of 2023. We project that funding for this program will be primarily driven by grants.

Activity 2: Facilitating first-time engagement in Texas legislative advocacy through our It's Our House programming and other grassroots engagement efforts. We will support 250 progressive BIWOC in first-time Texas legislative advocacy between 2023-2025 and over 750 progressive BIWOC in Texas legislative advocacy by 2032. We project that funding for these activities will be primarily driven by grants.

Activity 3: Engaging in voter education through partnerships with organizations already engaged with, serving, or led by BIWOC. We will provide information to at least 250 BIWOC in Texas about voter registration processes, election timelines, and voter resources by 2024 and over 5,000 women by 2032. We will roll out the program no later than the Fall of 2023. We project that funding for these activities will be primarily driven by grants.

Strategy 2: Building power among communities across Texas.

Activity 1: Developing the People's Priorities Committee with a significant portion of the membership (at least 45%) consisting of former program participants by 2025. We intend to have established regular committee meetings no later than the Spring of 2022.

Activity 2: Growing membership of the People's Priorities Committee to a minimum of at least 30 persons representing all areas of the state by 2024. We will grow membership to a minimum of at least 200 persons representing all areas of the state by 2032.

Activity 3: Facilitating a People's Hearing on priority issues determined by the People's Priorities Committee in each legislative session beginning in 2023.

Activity 4: Facilitating an Advocacy Day on priority issues determined by the People's Priorities Committee in each legislative session beginning in 2025.

**Organizational Objective 3: Breaking down systemic barriers to the civic participation and engagement in the Texas legislative process that affect Black, Indigenous, and women of color in Texas.**

Strategy 1: Combating the culture of exclusion in the Texas legislative process.

Activity 1: Providing training to legislative offices and advocacy organizations to give them the awareness, tools, and skills that they need to foster an inclusive work climate through our TXLege Inclusion Initiative Training Program. We will offer training to 40 offices and 10 organizations by 2025 and offer training to all legislative offices and 30 advocacy organizations by 2032. We intend to roll out the program no later than the Fall

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of 2024. We project that this program will generate revenue from grants, corporate and other institutional sponsorships, as well as individual giving.

Activity 2: Hosting a healing justice cohort and resources to support BIWOC who work in and engage with the Texas legislative process. This is aimed at cultivating a brave space where these women can share their experiences, struggles, and successes and collaborate, and build power to transform the culture of exclusion and isolation in the Texas legislative process. Cohort size will depend on community interest. Specific goals in terms of participation are yet to be determined. We intend to roll out the program no later than the Fall of 2023. We project that this program will generate revenue from grants and individual giving.

Strategy 2: Uplifting solutions for a more just and equitable Texas legislative process.

Activity 1: Performing research which highlights existing inequality in representation of BIWOC as both legislative staff and Texas Representatives and Senators and the need for change. This research will be driven toward naming and analyzing practices which present barriers to equitable representation and identifying and determining best practices to facilitate equitable representation. We intend to roll out the program no later than the Fall of 2023. We project that this program will generate revenue from grants and corporate giving.

Activity 2: Annually performing an anonymous survey of Legislative staff, including interns and staff in offices who choose not to participate in our programming, to assess the workplace climate of the Texas legislature for those who identify as BIWOC.

## **Operational Goals, Objectives, and Strategies**

Operational Goals are developed to create and sustain an organizational infrastructure and culture that provides staff and Board members with the tools that they need to effectively advance the mission of We Got This TX. Our goal is to build an organization that embodies the fiercely anti-racist, inclusive, and sustainable. We will actualize this goal by pursuing activities that:

1. Create effective organizational structures, policies, and procedures to advance the mission of the organization.
2. Create and sustain an anti-racist, and inclusive organizational culture.
3. Generate the financial resources necessary to fulfill the mission of We Got This TX.
4. Establish several strong strategic partnerships with existing organizations to more effectively advance the mission of the organization.

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## **Operational Objective 1: Create effective organizational structures, policies, and procedures to advance the mission of the organization.**

Strategy 1: Identify, recruit, and retain board members with competencies required to sustain and advance the mission of We Got This TX.

Activity 1: Define board member competencies needed. Determine by no later than the Fall of 2022.

Activity 2: Define roles and responsibilities, expectations, and authority. Completed in the Fall of 2021.

Activity 3: Develop onboarding processes and documents. We will establish these by no later than the Summer of 2022.

Activity 4: Develop and implement processes for training all Board Members. We will establish these by no later than the Summer of 2022.

Activity 5: Provide opportunities for Board members' professional development. The goal is to provide these opportunities quarterly and to base them on the interests of the Board of Directors so long as they are in line with them developing skills necessary to advance the mission of the organization. This activity is ongoing.

Activity 6: Establish committees, working groups and other entities with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and authority to study, recommend, implement actions upon board approval. We will implement this by no later than the Fall of 2022.

Strategy 2: Identify, recruit, and retain staff with competencies required to sustain and advance the mission of We Got This TX.

Activity 1: Determine organizational structure. Discussions will begin in the Spring of 2022 and will remain ongoing to meet the needs of the organization.

Activity 2: Determine prioritization for hiring staff. Discussions will begin in the Spring of 2022 and will remain ongoing to meet the needs of the organization.

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Activity 3: Develop selection and onboarding processes and documents. Discussions will begin in the Spring of 2022 and will remain ongoing to meet the needs of the organization.

Activity 4: Develop and implement processes for orienting all staff on the mission, vision, theory of change, strategic plan, and programs of We Got This TX. Discussions will begin in the Spring of 2022 and will remain ongoing to meet the needs of the organization.

Activity 5: Provide opportunities for staff members' professional development. Planning will begin in the Spring of 2022 and will remain ongoing to meet the needs of staff.

Activity 6: Perform annual Workplace Climate and Satisfaction survey. Development of the survey will begin in the Fall of 2022 and will be revisited annually by the Board of Directors.

Strategy 3: Develop and maintain organizational policies and procedures so as to expedite decision-making, foster organization wide alignment, and clarify expectations. Development will begin in the Summer of 2022 and will be ongoing.

Activity 1: Require review of organizational policies by the board once every two years.

Activity 2: Require the Executive Director or Chief Executive Officer to undertake at least 8 hours of professional development training in best practices for organizational management once every two years.

Activity 3: Perform annual staff review of workplace policies and procedures to be reviewed by the Board of Directors annually.

### **Operational Objective 2: Create and sustain an anti-racist, and inclusive organizational culture.**

Strategy 1: Establish Board policies and procedures that foster an anti-racist, and inclusive organizational culture. Discussions will begin in the Spring of 2022 and will remain ongoing to meet the needs of the organization.

Activity 1: Make good faith efforts to identify, recruit, and retain with intentionality a diverse Board whose composition reflects the communities we serve and the population of Texas as a whole. From the onset of our organization, this strategy has been

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prioritized and has resulted in a diverse Board. However, researching and implementing new practices that support this effort will remain ongoing.

Activity 2: Establish a Board Committee on Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and authority to study, recommend, implement actions upon board approval. This committee was established in the Winter of 2021 and will begin meeting in the Spring of 2022.

Activity 3: Develop and implement processes for training all Board Members in anti-racism, and implicit bias. These efforts are ongoing.

Activity 4: Perform an annual survey on Board Climate.

Strategy 2: Establish Staff policies and procedures that foster an anti-racist, and inclusive organizational culture. Development will begin in the Summer of 2022 and will be ongoing.

Activity 1: Make good faith efforts to identify, recruit, and retain with intentionality a diverse Staff whose composition reflects the communities we serve and the population of Texas as a whole. Development will begin in the Summer of 2022 and will be ongoing.

Activity 2: Adopt holistic and equitable hiring practices. Some strategies include but are not limited to requiring team members involved in recruitment and hiring to undertake implicit bias training, listing salaries, not discriminating on the basis of protected classes as well as socioeconomic status, years of experience, and educational attainment level. Development will begin in the Summer of 2022 and will be ongoing.

Activity 3: Develop and implement processes for training all Staff Members in anti-racism, and implicit bias. Development will begin in the Summer of 2022 and will be ongoing.

Activity 4: Perform an annual survey on internal Workplace Climate.

### **Operational Objective 3: Generate the financial resources necessary to fulfill the mission of We Got This TX.**

Strategy 1: Catalog needs and identify resource development goal, inclusive of We Got This TX's financial, and other resource needs; including, but not limited to programming costs. We intend to complete this by no later than the Fall of 2022.

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Activity 1: Establish the Development and Finance Committee. We intend to complete this by no later than the Spring of 2022.

Strategy 2: Develop and implement a comprehensive Development Plan. We intend to undertake this by no later than the Spring of 2023.

Activity 1: Research and select a vendor for an efficient donor database. We intend to undertake this by no later than the Spring of 2023.

Activity 2: Identify potential donors including vendors, corporations, foundations, stakeholders, and other partnerships. This process is ongoing.

Activity 3: Engage a Development Director/Grants Manager to oversee implementation of the Development Plan. We intend to undertake this no later than the Spring of 2023.

### **Operational Objective 4: Establish several strong strategic partnerships with existing organizations to more effectively advance the mission of the organization.**

Strategy 1: Identify and engage with other organizations and entities for partnership with our statewide training and fellowship programs. This process is ongoing.

Activity 1: Identify and engage with organizations and entities who serve our target population (progressive BIWOC). This process is ongoing.

Activity 2: Identify and engage with organizations and entities who engage persons in legislative advocacy. This process is ongoing.

Activity 3: Identify and engage with organizations and entities who engage persons in civic activity in specific regions or in a statewide capacity. This process is ongoing.

### **Vision for Organizational Structure**

To achieve our goals, We Got This TX will require eventual progression from having a working board to hiring staff who will be tasked with the day-to-day execution and implementation of the aforementioned strategies. We seek to build an organizational culture where the unique experiences and expertise of each individual are valued. For this reason, we will be intentional in ensuring that this philosophy is applied in all aspects

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of our hiring including role development, titles, pay transparency, equitable compensation, and a lack of formal educational requirements. Additionally, in an effort to combat replicating harms done by traditional hierarchical structures, we endeavor to structure our organization in a manner which reflects the necessary communication, collaboration, and transference of ideas that will be taking place. In doing so we will live up to our values by recognizing the integral nature of each of our employees and their roles. There are, however, some legally required positions that must be present in non-profit organizations which carry with them implied hierarchical structures such as Executive Director/Chief Executive Officers. We will actively work to ensure that these necessary administrative practices are seen as just that, and are not reflected in other tangible practices in our organization.

Below is an initial envisioning of roles and responsibilities that will be critical to advancing the mission of our organization. We have chosen to group these roles as “teams” who contribute a specific and valuable vantage point for decision making in the organization.

The Coordination Team will be responsible for carrying out the day-to-day administrative functions of the organization and ensuring proper communication amongst different teams. The Coordination Team will be composed of three teammates including the Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, and the Chief Financial Officer.

- The Executive Director will be responsible for monitoring programs and activities, improving performance, developing the organizational culture, reporting on revenue, and ensuring execution of goals established in this Strategic plan. They will also serve as the primary liaison between the organization and its Board of Directors.
- The Director of Operations will be responsible for designing and implementing business operations and practices, establishing policies that promote the organizational culture and vision, and evaluating operations of the company.
- The Director of Finance will be responsible for financial management, planning, analyzing, and proposing strategic directions for growth.

The Operations Team will be responsible for implementing business practices, and policies necessary to both create an inclusive organizational culture and advance the mission.

- The Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice will work in close collaboration with the Director of Operations. The Director will be responsible for ensuring that in all of its practices, policies, and procedures that the organization is acting on its commitment to an anti-racist and inclusive culture.

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- The Development Director will work in close collaboration with the Director of Finance. The Development Director will be responsible for implementing and overseeing activities such as grant development, corporate partnerships/sponsorships, and individual giving to both ensure the financial viability of the organization and meet the goals determined by the Director of Finance, the Board of Directors, and other staff.

The Mobilization Team will be responsible for implementing programs and activities necessary to engage progressive BIWOC across the state in building our collective civic power.

- The Director of Programs will oversee the implementation of the We Got This TX Fellowship, The Our Time Is Now Scholarship program, and The Capitol Connections mentorship program.
- The Director of Training will oversee the implementation of the TXLege Inclusion Initiative Training program. They will, alongside the Director of Programs, oversee the implementation of training components of the We Got This TX Fellowship. They will also, alongside the Director of Statewide Organizing, implement the It's Our House program. Lastly, they will also develop additional curriculum as needed. They will, in collaboration with partner organizations, also lead our voter education efforts.
- The Director of Statewide Organizing will, alongside the Director of Training, provide support to It's Our House program participants. They will collaborate with partners to engage, and mobilize progressive BIWOC in engaging in first-time legislative advocacy. They will, alongside the Advocacy Director, co-lead coordination and execution of our Advocacy Day, People's Hearings, and other relevant activities. They will, alongside a duly elected Chair of the People's Priorities Committee, co-lead the committee.

The Engagement Team will be responsible for performing outreach activities to mobilize progressive BIWOC and expand our reach across the state.

- The Partnerships Director will oversee strategic relationships with organizations who are led by, serve, or engage with progressive BIWOC across the state. They will, in coordination with the Director of Statewide Organizing and Director of Training, strategize and effectuate partnerships that will ensure the organization meets its goals.
- The Communications Director will be responsible for communicating the mission and vision of the organization through both print and digital communications. They will be solely responsible for directing the Herstory Archive and the Raise Your Voice blog. They will, in collaboration with the Director of Statewide

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Organizing and Advocacy Director, determine effective strategies and mediums to engage and mobilize program participants and break down barriers to reaching our intended program participants.

- The Advocacy Director will be, alongside the Statewide Organizer primarily responsible for supporting program participants in engaging in advocacy. They will, in collaboration with the Director of Training, provide support in the technical development of testimony, understanding specific legislative processes, and other advocacy efforts. They will, in collaboration with the Director of Statewide Organizing, co-lead coordination of Advocacy Day, People's Hearings and other relevant activities. They will also, in collaboration with the Director of Programs, support We Got This TX Fellows in developing their Capstone Projects.

The Vision Team will be responsible for working closely with the Executive Director to ensure implementation of this Strategic Plan and realization of the goals therein. The Vision Team consists of the Board of Directors and the Chairs of its committees.

### **Note on Compensation Practices**

As an organization, we are committed to fair compensation and pay equity and transparency. In an effort to promote pay equity, and prevent the emergence of dynamics related to hierarchical structures, we have established a target base compensation for each of the roles described at \$70,000 annually with benefits including but not limited to full medical benefits and paid time off. We will develop a transparent process for pay increases and bonuses. We have also established a target base compensation for our We Got This TX Fellows at \$48,000 annually with a stipend for healthcare and paid time off. The Board of Directors and the Chairs of its Committees will not receive compensation for legal reasons as defined in the organizational bylaws. Upon receiving necessary funding, we will ensure that contributors to our Herstory Archive, and Raise Your Voice blog, both past and present, as well as persons who share their lived experience and expertise through focus groups or any other We Got This TX programming will also be fairly compensated via stipends or gift cards.

### **Note on Potential Expansion and Replicability**

We Got This TX was born of conversations with progressive BIWOC across the state of Texas who were both current and former legislative staffers or employees at legislative advocacy organizations about our lived experiences working both inside and adjacent to the Texas legislature. From those conversations came the realization that the #txlege

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requires a reckoning. This requires a commitment to name, address, and transform the culture, systems, and practices of exclusion that currently exist that are preventing BIWOC from entering and remaining in rooms where decisions are being made that impact all Texans.

Although we recognize that increasing diversity and fostering inclusion of BIWOC is a critical issue in state legislatures across the nation, our organization is uniquely informed by the dynamics of the Texas legislative environment and for that reason we do not currently have plans to expand our organization nationally. We do, however, see potential for replicability in our training developed for legislative offices that will provide legislative offices and advocacy organizations to give them the awareness, tools, and skills that they need to foster an inclusive work climate. For this reason, we will continue to hold space for these conversations, evaluate needs, share resources with individuals and organizations on the ground that work with state legislatures across the country, and expand programs where it is determined that they will be beneficial in bringing about the systemic change that is long overdue.