

PRESS RELEASE

January 14, 2021

Blue Hills Civic Association (also dba Building Hartford -Community Action), Announce a Partnership with the Nellie Mae Education Foundation

The BHCA is proud to announce the recent partnership and alliance with the Nellie Mae Education Foundation to address the root causes of social injustice and systemic barriers in education.

The BHCA was awarded \$100,000 in 2020 and another \$100,000 in 2021 as General Operating Support grants and will use these funds to focus on community building, youth organizing and, collaborating with allies to address education inequities.

“I am especially excited to work with Alexis Harewood, Program Officer at NMEF, and the entire team. They really get it,” states Vicki Gallon-Clark, BHCA’s Executive Director. “They understand that “Anti-Blackness” exists and that there is a specific kind of racial prejudice directed toward Black people specifically as it relates to racism. This anti-Blackness affects Black people in different ways, and in some cases more significantly than other groups. Furthermore, the NMEF team sends a powerful message that not only is it ok to talk about anti-Blackness. We must openly talk about it, if we are to work together to combat this type of white supremacy.”

While BHCA provides services to individuals throughout Greater Hartford, many of its participants reside in North Hartford's Promise Zone (NHPZ). The NHPZ includes the Clay Arsenal, Northeast and Upper Albany neighborhoods where the average per capita income is only \$12,099 annually.

Kelvin Lovejoy, BHCA’s Lead Community Organizer commented, “At BHCA, we believe that in order to create transformative change in individuals and communities, we must engage and continually build the leadership capacity of young people in communities most affected by injustice (i.e., racism). BHCA is pushing this work forward with the help of two youth organizing initiatives: B.L.O.C. and C.O.R.E. The bottom line is that we *acutely* recognize the need to "center youth as leaders," and we are looking to partner with the Nellie Mae Foundation in order to achieve this goal in the Hartford area.”

About BHCA:

The Blue Hills Civic Association, founded in 1962 empowers the people living and working in the Blue Hills and surrounding communities to create stable and attractive neighborhoods through organizing, advocacy and multi-generational programs that have three areas of impact: youth, families and community.

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