



Action Steps for EQUITY and BELONGING: A WORKING PLAN

Florida Children's Theatre (FLCT) commits to the ongoing work of anti-racism, and pledges to continue exploring the complex role that race and equity play in the fields of theatre, arts, and education. The following action plan recognizes the critical importance of a continual process to achieve equity and belonging, both on our stages and in our community.

The mission of FLCT is to teach the art of life through the magic of theatre. We commit to using our theatrical platform to be part of the change needed to reshape our world in a way that honors, celebrates, protects, and highlights BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) individuals, so that the stories of all may be seen, learned from, and explored on our stages.

Florida Children's Theatre recognizes the brutality and impact of systemic racism, and the need for change in structures that support these systems.

- We affirm and value the humanity of Black people, and those of African descent.
- We acknowledge the oppression and mistreatment of BIPOC groups, including Asian, Asian Indian, Black, Hispanic/Latino(x), Indigenous, and Pacific Islander peoples, among others.
- We recognize the discrimination and abuse faced by LGBTQ+ people.
- We respect the unique challenges faced by persons with disabilities.
- We realize the historic persecution of many religious identities.

The above list is not exhaustive; its intent is to include students, staff and Board members, and families belonging to any historically minority or marginalized group(s). Each person deserves a respectful and loving community with the full support of allies. FLCT commits to being that place.

This is a dynamic and evolving document that will be updated or amended as we listen to even more voices and put these steps into action. We will build on our anti-racism, anti-bias and inclusion efforts to identify areas of growth and strategic recommendations on a regular basis.

This Working Plan is designed to be systemic and sustainable, and falls into four different categories: **Infrastructure**, **Policy**, **Programming**, and **Community**. It was developed through leadership from the FLCT Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force (bios follow) and informed by FLCT's participation anti-racist trainings including the *Antiracism in TYA Series*, Theatre for Young Audiences/USA in partnership with Arts in Color, September-December, 2020 and the *Antiracist Theatre Strategies Series (ARTS)*, Theatre League of South Florida, September, 2020-February, 2021, among others.



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Infrastructure

We believe that all members of our community have a unique responsibility to learn about bias and racism in a manner that is appropriate for their own age and identity. We intend to increase anti-racism education and cultural competency among all members of our community.

- All members of the FLCT Board of Trustees and all members of the FLCT Staff will be required to engage in anti-racist education, and must complete additional professional development in the area of race at a minimum every two years. (completed first training July, 2020)
- Seek diverse candidates to fill staff vacancies, and ensure clear processes of support and reporting to foster retention and both personal and professional growth, with intentional pathways to leadership positions. (ongoing)
- Continue to safeguard access to programming by supporting, protecting, and funding the scholarship program, to improve socio-economic diversity. (ongoing)
- Create and communicate mentoring structures for current students, Staff, and program alumni with BIPOC community leaders and industry professionals. (Summer, 2021)
- Hold regular and ongoing accountability checks on the efficacy and implementation of this plan, revisiting, updating, and adding to the plan as appropriate. (biannual reviews)
- Maintain the FLCT Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force as accountability partners and advisors. (Task Force was developed in September of 2020, will be ongoing)
- Review and revise all elements of governance, finances, and policy through an anti-racist lens. (completed by May 31, 2021)

Policy

Put in place safeguards and procedures for the protection of our BIPOC community members, and for the wellbeing of all.

- Establish and share a clear process for reporting incidents of concern, including racially based bias, offending behavior, discrimination, and microaggressions with clear processes to follow. (March, 2021)
- Highlight the HR processes and protocols that are part of all handbooks during onboarding of all new Staff members, full or part-time, and revisit all language and policies to ensure that the consequences of committing racially discriminatory or biased acts towards colleagues or students are clear and consistent. (Review completed October, 2020, ongoing)
- Provide a BIPOC liaison, or team of people, who will be available to all students, parents, and families during their participation at FLCT. (March, 2021)
- Create an alumni mentoring program and ensure diverse representation for BIPOC students. (Summer, 2021)



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Programming

All programs ensure that all members of the FLCT community understand that racist remarks, actions, and behaviors will not be tolerated. Program materials, content, and staffing will be representative and reflective.

- All students in 2nd grade or older will receive a developmentally appropriate Student Conduct form that includes expectations of behavior with specific anti-racist language. That form will be signed by both students and parents or guardians. Younger students will continue to learn about treating others with kindness and respect as a regular part of the program. (April, 2021)
- All class materials will be audited and amended as needed to ensure a wide representation of BIPOC stories. (ongoing)
- Audition forms will include anti-racist language and must be signed by all students and parents prior to participation. (April, 2021)
- There will be a racially diverse team in the casting room for every production, whose members have contributory and decision-making power as part of the casting process. (January, 2021)
- BIPOC artistic leadership will be sought out, encouraged, and frequent; all productions about any specific BIPOC stories or reflective of such will include artistic leadership that represents those communities. (ongoing)
- Stage makeup, tights, and any production-related materials to accurately reflect, highlight, and complement all skin-tones. (ongoing)
- Review and strengthen retention practices, with a focus on Black students, using exit interviews and input from current students/families. (by May, 2021)
- Highlight anti-racism, as well as strategies for building empathy and understanding, through both existing and new dramatic works, as well as social justice outreach programming. (Summer, 2021, ongoing)

Community

FLCT will use its position, facilities, and resources to support BIPOC artists, companies, vendors, and community partners, strengthen existing partnerships, and seek ways to increase participation from, and connection to, BIPOC individuals and organizations.

- Secure audition, rehearsal, and performance dates and times for BIPOC community partners to use the facilities of FLCT as part of the annual calendar. (from October, 2020 on)
- Offer artistic support and production resources to community partners. (ongoing)
- Continue to develop and share culturally specific, social justice programming and offer outreach programs to community partners. (ongoing)



**Diversity, Equity, and
Inclusion Task Force
2020-2021**



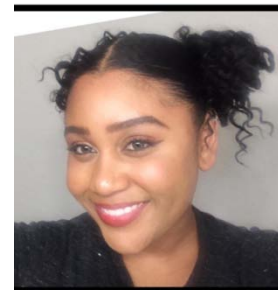
Karen Ash

Karen is currently a Regional Coordinator for the Florida Department of Education where she trains hundreds of teachers and administrators impacting thousands of students. As a member of Florida Council for Teachers of English, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Middle School Association, and International Reading Association, Karen has presented at many education conferences, both home and abroad. She is an "FLCT mom" and is currently the Chair of FLCT's Board of Trustees.



Linda Brown

Linda has been an Educator in Broward County since 2001 as a Substitute Teacher, Teacher and Teacher Assistant. Prior to that she worked for the Florida Department of Corrections from 1979 to 1998 positions as a Corrections Officer, Job Placement Counselor, Probation Officer, and Correctional Probation Specialist. She graduated from FAU with a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice in 1979. In 1978 she became a Charter Member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, the 1st of The Divine Nine Greek Letter Organizations to come to FAU. Born in Ocala in 1956, she grew up in the era of the Civil Rights movement. However, her childhood experiences did not make her bitter, it made her stronger. She believes, each child has the potential for greatness as long as there is equity in education.



Belinda Bruno-Piverger

Belinda is a lifelong lover of the arts, singer/actor/performer, advocate of the performing arts, and a full time real estate investor. One of Belinda's favorite sayings is "The Time Is Now!" and is thrilled to be rolling up her sleeves and getting to work for social justice in the arts and beyond. She is an FLCT alum having performed the role of Aida in a partnership production with the African American Research Library Theatre.



Juliana Brydon

Juliana Brydon was born and raised in Cali, Colombia. At the age of 17 she moved to the USA and got involved in the banking industry with positions in international banking, commercial lending and as a compliance auditor. While working in the banking industry she took on the role of employee liaison for charities. She loved this area and soon became a Board member of March of Dimes for about 5 years, running fundraisers for Children's Resource Fund and Blood drives among others. She is an "FLCT mom" and currently serves of FLCT's Board of Trustees as Treasurer.



Mahnaz Caroll

Mahnaz is an alum of FLCT and is very excited to be a part of the FLCT Equity Task Force. Mahnaz graduated from Miami's New World School of the Arts High School in 2019 and now is studying at Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts as a BA (Hons) acting student. This past summer Mahnaz worked as a camp counselor at FLCT.



Diedra Chatman

Diedra is a Project Manager with Intertech Construction Corporation of America. With over 18 years of experience in both the public and private sectors, Diedra has managed projects for various restaurant brands (Chipotle, Aurify Brands) high end retailers, luxury condominiums and education facilities, including FLCT's new Broward College center. Diedra holds an MBA from Nova Southeastern University and Bachelor's in Architecture from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University.



Chrislen de Guzman Cobb

Chrislen is an FIT graduate with experience in general management, marketing, and editorial/event production. She is currently pursuing her 2nd degree in music production from Berklee at Boston Conservatory. She is passionate about the current change each industry is striving to achieve to reach an inclusive and equal society and, as an alum, is excited to be involved in FLCT's action towards this change.



Dana Freeman

Dana is a licensed clinical social worker who devotes her life to helping people achieve inner peace through teaching that people are much more alike than different, which fosters unity in one's community. Her passion is facilitating group therapy sessions for those dealing with substance abuse and/or mental health issues. She has been a psychotherapist in a variety of settings over the past three decades and is dedicated "FLCT mom."



Andre B. Gonzalez

Andre is a private wealth advisor at Synovus bank, where he develops comprehensive financial solutions for high net worth clients. He has served clients in the industry for over a decade, and among other distinctions, has been recognized for unwavering customer focus and a passion for educating clients on how best to achieve their financial goals. In his free time, Andre enjoys fishing and spending time with his wife and two daughters



Andrea Heighes

Andrea is a Hispanic American Kindergarten teacher at Somerset Academy Riverside in Coral Springs. She loves working with children, theatre, and Disney. Seeing her students smiling faces every day brightens her day. She has been with FLCT for 9 years, as summer performer and part time teaching artist.



Ron Hutchins

Ron is FLCT's resident choreographer. He has been working professionally in the theatre for over 30 years, including locally at theatres such as Actor's Playhouse and The Wick and internationally as far as China. He is a multiple Carbonell Award winner.



Belvit Jordan

Belvit is a seasoned leader with 23 years of senior management experience as a presenter, promotor and producer for theatrical productions, concerts, cultural and special events. Additionally she teaches young professionals event and stage management as well as theatre operations. Since 2001 she has been the Producer / Theatre Manager / Operations Manager for the African American Research Library & Cultural Center in Fort Lauderdale.



Patricia Jordan

Patricia is the proud mom of 11 children, 3 of whom are grown adults. Most of the children participated at FLCT for many years, with a special love for the circus program. She spends her time volunteering in the schools that her children attends, and has recently relocated to Georgia from South Florida



Ojobayo Lyons

Ojobayo is an FLCT alum and presently a student at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts studying Acting at the Strasberg Studio. He was a student at FLCT for 12 years, performing in many shows including Courfeyac in *Les Miserables*, Tommy in *Carrie*, and *Booker T. Washington* in *Ragtime*.



Alberto Rosende

Alberto currently stars as firefighter Blake Gallo on NBC's *Chicago Fire*, after playing Simon Lewis on the Freeform series *Shadowhunters* for three seasons. He is an FLCT alum who played *Radames* in *Aida*, *Marius* in the 2009 *Les Miserables*, and *Link Larkin* in *Hairspray*, among others. As the co-creator of production company 74th Avenue Films with his filmmaker brother, Diego, he produces films that take a deeper look into one's ideology and belief system. Most recently, they traveled 10,000 miles around the United States asking people of all ages and backgrounds the timely question of "How do you feel being American?" for their documentary film "American Identity Project. Alberto studied at the New York University Tisch School of the Arts, graduating in 2015.



Marcus Rollins

Marcus is an FLCT alum and is presently serving in U.S. Navy as an Operations Specialist, Second Class, having been stationed in Bahrain from 2017-2020. He is completing is Associates degree while serving and has a pending application to become a Surface Warfare Officer.



Josh Venkataraman

Josh Venkataraman is a Branded Content Manager at ViacomCBS but outside of his professional career, he has dedicated his time to fighting for social justice. Most notably, he successfully led a campaign to posthumously pardon Florida's "Groveland Four," four young Black men who were victims of racism in the 1940s-50s. He continues to fight for social justice and equity through his work with the Equal Justice Initiative as well as the Innocence Project. He is a proud FLCT alum.



David Wright

David currently serves on FLCT board, and is not only a former student but a former staff member as well. Currently residing in Los Angeles and working in film marketing, he is excited to contribute to a theater community he loves so much. *"The theatre was created to tell people the truth about life and the social situation."* – Stella Adler