



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **SEATTLE MARINERS ANNOUNCE THREE NEW COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANTS ADVANCING RACIAL EQUITY**

Recipient organizations are working to improve physical and mental health support for youth and accelerate equitable outcomes for BIPOC communities

Mariners Care, the Seattle Mariners nonprofit foundation, today announced the awarding of three new Community Impact Grants to organizations focused on systemic change leading to positive physical and mental health improvements for youth and to accelerate equitable outcomes for Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) communities.

In addition to announcing the three latest recipients, Mariners Care also announced the opening of requests for proposals for the next round of grants, to be awarded in late July 2021.

The \$1 million Seattle Mariners Community Impact Grant program was announced last July as part of a broad set of commitments to social justice and racial equity. These commitments include investments in organizations, programs and partnerships focused on long-term, systemic change that lead to positive health outcomes for youth and improve opportunities for economic equity in BIPOC communities.

The three new grantees are in addition to a \$100,000 grant awarded in March to the **Seattle Foundation Fund for Inclusive Recovery**, which is working to address widening inequities in our community that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The uncertainty and worry felt by so many in our communities during this pandemic has been exacerbated by longstanding issues of inequity and lack of access. The timeliness of the Seattle Mariners efforts to support both the health and wellness of our young people, and accelerate equitable outcomes for Black and Brown communities, and other communities of color, that have struggled in the last year could not be better. This is a true demonstration of their commitment to being a valued community partner and leader. These are crucial investments in our region as we begin rebuilding,” said Michelle Merriweather, President and CEO of the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle.

“The Seattle Mariners value our place in the Pacific Northwest Community and strive to make a difference in the lives of the people in our region. By investing strategically to support partners working toward systemic change, particularly in BIPOC communities, we believe we can have a positive impact on the physical and mental health of our youth and help grow economic equity, particularly in under-resourced communities,” said Fred Rivera, Seattle Mariners Executive Vice President and General Counsel.

### **Community Impact Grant Awardees**

- \$20,000 – **You Grow Girl!**, a Seattle-based program that provides mental and behavioral health services to female-identifying youth and families from BIPOC communities.
- \$20,000 – **King County Play Equity Coalition**, a network of more than 100 organizations from across King County that work collaboratively to address the lack of access and resources for all youth, especially those from under-resourced communities, to participate in sport, play and physical activity.
- \$25,000 – **Minority Business Executive Program**, University of Washington Foster School of Business, which supports capacity building and access to capital for minority owned business.

### **You Grow Girl!**

The \$20,000 grant will provide mental health supports through You Grow Girl!'s therapeutic housing program, which will provide wrap-around services for homeless young women of color, specifically those who have been harmed by the foster care and juvenile justice systems, with the goal of setting them on a path toward self-sufficiency in housing and employment as well as positive mental health outcomes.

Founded in 2002 by Jamila Coleman, You Grow Girl! began with a focus on inspiring girls and young women through mentorship, counseling and leadership. Despite the pandemic, You Grow Girl! continues to provide behavioral health support for girls and families including such services as assistance with online school, food and other necessary supplies. You Grow Girl!'s goal is to increase racial equity, amplify economic opportunity among under-resourced populations and empower young women to become leaders so they can become self-sufficient and thrive.

### **King County Play Equity Coalition**

The \$20,000 grant will catalyze creation of a Youth Action Team to increase and amplify youth leadership and perspective as the King County Play Equity Coalition builds equitable solutions for access to play, physical activity and organized sports across the region.

The Centers for Disease Control recommends youth get 60 minutes of moderate activity, seven days a week. Youth in King County are much less active than the national average with fewer than one in five meeting the CDC guidelines. A study by the University of Washington found that girls, youth from low income households and youth from communities of color are less likely to have access to or participate in play, physical activity and organized sports. The coalition and its 100-plus members are focused on increasing equitable access to play and youth sports across King County.

### **Minority Business Executive Program, University of Washington Foster School of Business**

The \$25,000 grant will provide scholarships for five local BIPOC business owners and their teams, specifically in hospitality and general construction, to participate in intensive training to strengthen their ability to recover and prosper despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. Areas of support include use of financial tools, strategic plans for growth and sustainability, new technology, marketing, access to global markets and leadership.

The history of race in America continues to surface through persistent issues of inequity and injustice that deeply impact BIPOC communities and the ability of BIPOC owned businesses to thrive. The Minority Business Executive Program at the UW Foster School of Business focuses on helping business owners strengthen their core skills and infrastructure and connect them to capital and to contracting opportunities, three areas that disproportionately impede the success of BIPOC business owners.

### **Seattle Mariners Community Impact Grant Program**

Proposals are now being accepted for the next round of grants to be awarded in late July 2021. The application process is open to nonprofit organizations in Washington state working in the following areas:

- **Physical Activity for BIPOC Youth** - Support will be provided to organizations and efforts focused on research, advocacy or programs that increase youth participation in physical activity, with a focus on baseball and softball.
- **Mental Health Support for BIPOC Youth** - Support will be provided to organizations that work to decrease the systemic barriers associated with mental health needs and grow access to mental health support for youth ages 5-18, especially during the COVID crisis and recovery.

Go to [Mariners.com/CommunityImpactGrants](https://Mariners.com/CommunityImpactGrants) more information.

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