



**black philanthropy initiative**

*A Field of Interest Fund at The Rhode Island Foundation*

## **STATEMENT OF NEED**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Over its 92-year history, The Rhode Island Foundation has been a permanent and steadfast resource for serving the Rhode Island community's ongoing and pressing needs. It has been directed by its guiding principles of permanence, integrity, vision, accessibility and partnerships.

True to its mission, The Rhode Island Foundation (RIF) has partnered with Rhode Island's Black community to establish a new RIF special initiative – The Rhode Island Foundation/Black Philanthropy Initiative (BPI). Endorsed by the RIF Board of Directors, BPI will address issues impacting Rhode Island's Black community through the creation of a RIF permanently endowed Black Philanthropy Fund.

### **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP**

In 2005, RIF and a dedicated group of well-known members of Rhode Island's Black community, who serve on the BPI Steering Committee, began working on a case for supporting The Black Philanthropy Fund. In addition, they expanded a dialogue into the community and put into motion the steps for planning the program and administrative structure for the new Fund.

The BPI Steering Committee includes Co-Chairs Edward Clifton, Linda Newton and Michael Van Leesten, and Members Manny Barrows, Fred Butler, Steven Craddock, Antonio DaSilva, Jason Fowler, Toni Green, Melissa Husband, Gertrude Jones, Beverley Ledbetter, Darren Lopes, Lloyd Monroe, Keith Stokes, Walter Stone, and Rev., Dr. Jeffrey A. Williams.

### **COMMUNITY CHALLENGES**

The Rhode Island Foundation and the BPI Steering Committee regard the economic, social and political data pertaining to Rhode Island's Black community to be compelling for establishing The Black Philanthropy Fund.

- 11.7% of RI's Black population is unemployed
- 22% of RI's Black population live below the poverty line
- 50% of RI's Black households earn just over \$.53 for each \$1.00 earned by RI's non-Black households
- Black Rhode Islanders are nearly twice as likely than non-Black Rhode Islanders to be without health insurance
- 15.6% of RI's Black population needing prenatal care do not receive it
- 23% of RI Black children have elevated blood lead levels
- RI Black youths between the ages of 16 and 19 are 1½ times more likely than non-Black RI youths of the same age to drop out of high school
- 16% of RI Black youths between the ages of 16 and 19 are not in high school
- 16% of RI Black children are proficient in Math and 22% are proficient in English
- Black Rhode Islanders are nearly 10 times more likely to be incarcerated than non-Black Rhode Islanders

## **BLACK PHILANTHROPY INITIATIVE – VISION AND MISSION**

The vision of the Black Philanthropy Initiative is to visibly and effectively impact critical issues and aspirations facing the Rhode Island Black community today and in the future. The mission of the Initiative is to advance equity and social justice for Blacks in Rhode Island by addressing economic, cultural, educational, social and public policy issues through the creation of a permanently endowed philanthropic fund.

The Black Philanthropy Fund will pursue its mission by:

- Engaging the Black community and other Rhode Islanders as active philanthropists to address challenges in the Black community
- Making grants that measurably improve the status of Blacks in Rhode Island in areas such as Black leadership, community resources, and public/private policy development Rhode Island

In 2008, BPI commissioned a scan of Rhode Island's Black community to provide data on critical areas of need as well as to inform areas of BPI grant funding, leading BPI to identify its initial two-year focus:

"Economic Sustainability and the Black Family: Housing, Financial Literacy, and Job Training"

Ongoing research will be generated before establishing future priorities. It is the goal of the Initiative to be aware of near and long term needs, opportunities, aspirations and impact for Rhode Island's Black community.

## **CAMPAIGN NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The goal of the Black Philanthropy Initiative is to raise the funds for and to house at The Rhode Island Foundation a permanently endowed Black Philanthropy Fund that will be overseen by an Advisory Board appointed by RIF with input from the BPI Steering Committee and RI's Black community, and representing different skill sets and sectors of RI's Black community.

The Initiative seeks to establish a \$2,000,000 Black Philanthropy Fund over the three year period 2007-2010, with vision for the Fund growing through gifts and earnings. Based upon RIF's current spending rate of 4.75% of a sixteen quarter trailing market average for grant distribution and fee schedule of 1.78% for administration, a fully capitalized \$2,000,000 fund will generate approximately \$95,000 for grants in its first year, and in ever-increasing numbers in future years.

To further its endorsement of the Initiative, to seed the Fund, and to provide impetus for The Campaign for Black Philanthropy, RIF has committed substantial resources in the form of a \$1 for \$1 challenge match or \$1,000,000 toward the \$1,000,000 Campaign goal. It is the goal of the Initiative to raise the \$1,000,000 over three years from 2007 and 2010.

## **SUMMARY**

The Rhode Island Foundation and the Black Philanthropy Initiative Steering Committee are dedicated to the Fund campaign goal and to the vision and mission of the Initiative which are dependant upon the campaign's success. The entire Rhode Island community is invited to support the Initiative which will impact and strengthen all Rhode Islanders. Sincere thanks are extended to the many leaders, supporters and participants who will make the Initiative possible.

Your response at this time to the campaign needs will be an important step toward enabling all to share in the realization and benefits of this new and crucial initiative. Your consideration and support are appreciated.