

EduLeaders of Color R.I. receives grants from Nellie Mae Education Foundation and Rhode Island Foundation to support *educators of color* and *equitable* classrooms.

PROVIDENCE, RI – EduLeaders of Color Rhode Island, in partnership with the Center for Collaborative Education, is pleased to announce the receipt of grants from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the Rhode Island Foundation. The awards will fund EduLeaders of Color RI’s ongoing work to support prospective and existing educators of color in Rhode Island in the program’s effort to expand educational equity.

“EduLeaders of Color Rhode Island is extremely excited and appreciative that we will be receiving funding from Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the Rhode Island Foundation to support such an important and much needed initiative in our state,” says Karla E. Vigil, EduLeaders of Color RI co-founder. “We are eager to continue supporting educators and leaders of color committed to tackling inequities in our educational system and beyond.”

EduLeaders of Color RI creates spaces for educators and leaders of color by hosting monthly meetups, where participants collaborate with like-minded community leaders and build on innovative ideas. Network participants receive peer-to-peer support, engage in professional development opportunities, and discuss and implement equitable practices in schools.

“This is a huge investment into the future of our education system,” EduLeaders of Color RI co-founder Carlon Howard explains. “We plan to determine measures of success for our program to demonstrate its effectiveness as well as capture the inspirational stories of our leaders that cannot simply be explained through numbers.”

“Rhode Island’s student population is increasingly diverse,” adds Lisa DiMartino, the Rhode Island Foundation’s strategic initiative officer for education. “Supporting talented leaders of color who are committed to expanding educational opportunities for underserved students and communities is directly connected to our focus on ensuring educational success for every student.”

Since its creation in 2016, EduLeaders of Color RI has convened over 300 diverse educators over nine events and meetups. Following a structured protocol, all EduLeaders of Color RI meetups and events involve networking, targeted supports through a menu of topics, guest speakers representing community organizations, and sharing best practices. EduLeaders of Color RI will expand and develop that work by providing professional development



seminars outside of the monthly meetups and developing an online resource bank surrounding race and identity in education reform.

“The Center for Collaborative Education is enthused to partner with EduLeaders of Color RI as it strives to elevate the role and voice of educators of color in tackling systemic inequities and creating learning spaces that embrace the ever-growing diversity of our students,” says Dan French, executive director of the Center for Collaborative Education.

To address the dearth of educators of color in Rhode Island, EduLeaders of Color RI will also explore collaboration with a higher education degree-granting institution to design a teacher-credentialing Master’s program focused on preparing future teacher leaders of color through an equity and social justice lens.

“We are excited to be supporting EduLeaders of Color RI in creating an education system that more equitably serves Rhode Island students, especially students of color who have traditionally not been served by our system,” notes Nick Donohue, president and CEO of the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. “Having a diverse network of educators, business and community leaders committed to educational equity will help ensure Rhode Island’s students are prepared to succeed in life after high school and contribute to their communities as informed citizens.”



EduLeaders of Color R.I. network was launched in November 2016, with the goal of recruiting, supporting, and developing talented leaders of color in Rhode Island who are committed to expanding educational opportunities for our most underserved students and communities. EduLeaders of Color RI is constructed on a belief that a network of like-minded educators is a powerful means of providing peer-to-peer support and professional development; serves as a strong voice in education advocacy for addressing educational inequities; and promotes schools in which cultural proficiency and equitable educational opportunities are the norm. Members include principals, assistant principals, district administration, and education non-profit leaders.



The Center for Collaborative Education (CCE), established in 1994, works to transform schools to ensure that all students have the skills needed to succeed in the classroom and beyond. CCE works directly with educators and other professionals in schools, districts, and states to increase educational access and opportunity for every student, with particular attention to groups that have historically been underserved.

