

monadnock

diversity, equity, inclusion & belonging

COALITION



Advancing equity in the Monadnock Region.

OUR PURPOSE

The national dialog on diversity, equity and inclusion has increased substantially over the past several years and is now a focal point of our everyday lives. However, this is far from a new or trendy issue. These issues have existed for generations and as our society becomes more diverse it is critically important that our society works towards equity and inclusion for all of us. Our Monadnock Region communities are not exempt and we too must become more equitable, more inclusive and more welcoming to ensure our future social and economic success.

The purpose of the Monadnock Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Coalition (MDEIB Coalition) is to bring together a multidisciplinary group of individuals and entities working together to promote and develop the Monadnock Region as a welcoming and inclusive place for all including Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals who live, work and visit our community. Additionally, the MDEIB Coalition will partner with community members, other institutions and businesses to promote diversity, create meaningful community engagement, and build a diverse and inclusive foundation for all races, sexual identities, genders and people with disabilities.

OUR VISION

The Monadnock Region is a welcoming and inclusive place for all including Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) individuals who live, work and visit our community.



The MDEIB Coalition was formed in the summer of 2021 through a joining together of two Keene centered groups working to address this long-standing issue. The City of Keene's Racial Justice and Community Safety Committee Report issued March 18, 2021 provided a sound, actionable document as the centerpiece of the Coalition's formation.

In its earliest days two essential elements for success were identified and agreed upon. First, a true "coalition" of stakeholders was required. To be successful, the MDEIB Coalition has to be inclusive of all voices. Second, this has to be a regional initiative including the entire Monadnock Region. This important work cannot succeed within the boundaries of any one town or community.

Despite the limitations caused by the pandemic and relative low profile, the MDEIB Coalition has been busy laying the groundwork for a meaningful launch in 2022. A strong and diverse group of community leaders and members have met regularly to develop an organizational charter and governance structure. A listing of MDEIB Coalition Steering Committee members can be found at the end of this document. Rather than create a new 501(c)3, the Coalition has come together as a Committee of the Keene Family YMCA whose Board of Directors has approved the charter and commissioned the MDEIB Coalition to support the work ahead. Committees have been identified including Law Enforcement, Regional Engagement, Business Advisory, Education, Fund Raising, LBGTQ+ and People of Color, and the committees are beginning to assemble. Two public sessions introducing the MDEIB Coalition to an invited audience in the fall of 2021 were well attended and enthusiastically received.



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Racial Justice and Community Safety Committee Report was derived from public input sessions and identified five priority areas. These areas provide the foundation for the coalition. Their role will include, but not be limited to:

- 1. Public Safety Advocacy** – Advocate and audit for proven practices by local law enforcement agencies, ensuring the health and safety of the agencies have the best possible outcome for all residents (especially our BIPOC residents).
- 2. Community Leadership** – Ensure community leaders are actively engaging in combating racism.
- 3. Community Education and Awareness** – Create safe community spaces to have candid anti-racism conversations, build awareness around racism and celebrate diversity. This can be accomplished by encouraging and hosting diverse celebration events that promote the cultures of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).
- 4. Corporate and Institutional Engagement** – Incorporate diversity in workplace and institutional culture to positively impact the attraction and retention of a diverse workforce.
- 5. K-12 Education Advocacy** – Advocate and audit for specific anti-racism policies in the school system to consider fair and equitable disciplinary practices, curriculum and student anti-racism education.



ESTABLISHING LEADERSHIP

The MDEIB Coalition intends to be a valuable resource for the region in the journey towards our vision. This will include training, resources including toolkits and “how to get started” materials, forums for sharing information, successes and challenges, and opportunities for community input.

The MDEIB Coalition Director will play a central role in the process of keeping these many initiatives and volunteers on track.

The Director’s responsibilities will include:

- Developing, overseeing and assisting with partnerships in key sectors.
- Strengthening DEI capacity, infrastructure and policy at municipal, community and institutional levels.
- Reporting on progress and outcomes to stakeholders and the community at large to build awareness and support involvement in the MDEIB.
- Provide training and identify trainers where needed to support the needs of stakeholders.
- Identify and leverage funding streams and resources to ensure the sustainability of the MDEIB Coalition.



NEXT STEPS

Having completed the MDEIB charter and Committee structure, the next steps for the coalition are:

- Garner regional community involvement
- Launch and develop committees
- Raise the funds and resources to hire a Coalition Director
- Recruit more BIPOC voices
- Build awareness
- Create a 3–5 year Strategic Plan (with community input)
- Recruit voices from other important diverse groups
- Begin implementing education programs in Q2–3
- Survey region businesses to assess DEIB needs

2022–2023 DELIVERABLES

- A full-time Coalition Director is in place as a resource to the region to foster widespread collaboration and ensure coalition sustainability.
- MDEIB engagement leads to a greater understanding of, and commitment to DEIB across the region.
- A regional welcoming packet and introduction strategy is developed for new BIPOC, LGBTQ+ and individuals with disabilities.
- New opportunities created for interested businesses, organizations and community members to collaborate on strategies that address safety and racial justice issues.
- MDEIB committees and public sessions provide a forum and safe place for dialog about DEIB related topics.
- 200+ individuals from throughout the region actively participating on MDEIB committees.
- 2,000+ community members engaged in at least one Coalition activity.
- Area businesses and organizations better positioned to grow healthy workplaces and welcome diverse individuals as employees and patrons
- A variety of resources addressing various DEIB related topics are available for different stakeholder groups.
- Self and peer assessment tools are developed and utilized to help businesses, organizations, groups and individuals inform their own DEIB process.

Monadnock Area Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee Coalition Operating Budget

The MDEIB has established a preliminary budget of \$250,000 for the first two years of operations.

Annual budget

MDEIB Director Compensation	\$ 75,000
Events and Programs	\$ 10,000
Printing and Promotional Materials	\$ 7,500
Contracted Services	\$ 7,500
Travel and Training Expenses	\$ 7,500
Administrative and Support Services	\$ 7,500
Website and Other Communications	\$ 6,000
Equipment and Furnishings	\$ 4,000
Total	\$125,000





Steering Committee Members – March 2022

Aditi Saleh, Student
Andrew Pollom, Franklin Pierce University
Catherine Workman, Keene City Councilor (MDEIB Vice Chairperson)
CeCe Telfer, Athlete, Student
Dan Smith, Keene Family YMCA
Dottie Morris, Keene State College
Eli Rivera, Sheriff, Cheshire County
Gail Somers, Owner, Yahso Jamaican Grille
George Hansel, Mayor of Keene; Filtrine Manufacturing
Heidi Schwieger, Jonathan Daniels Center for Social Responsibility (MDEIB Treasurer)
Mark Bodin, Savings Bank of Walpole
Michael Kennedy, Keene Church of the Nazarene
Michelle DellaVita, Monadnock United Way
Megan Lafaso Hercher, Monadnock Food Co-op; Owner, Sullivan Country Store
Mohammed Saleh, Keene Human Right Committee
Pierre Morton, Franklin Pierce University (MDEIB Chairperson)
Shawn LaFrance, Cheshire Medical Center
Sylvia McBeth, Community member
Tia Hockett, Main Street Group

GET INVOLVED

We are optimistic that together we can make meaningful progress in this long-standing societal and local issue. The experiences of prejudice and bigotry shared by members of our diverse community with the Keene Racial Justice and Community Safety Committee do not reflect the type of region we aspire to be. The coalition model has been adopted because it will take all of us to become the welcoming community we can and must be.

Please contact Dan Smith at dsmith@keene-ymca.org for more information about getting involved in and/or providing financial support for the Monadnock, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Coalition.