



The Sunbridge Institute Diversity Fund

Diversity. Equity. Inclusion. These social justice goals — widely discussed across today's society — also sit at the forefront of an important dialogue currently taking place inside the Waldorf movement. Nationwide, schools, teacher education centers, and affiliated organizations are examining the social and demographic climate of North American Waldorf schools, exploring what it means to create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive Waldorf classroom and community culture that reflects and honors the broad diversity of our nation.

What does it take to achieve these goals? How can we listen, learn, and respond to the interests and needs of the Waldorf movement at large and Waldorf students and teachers in particular? What measures can our teacher education institutes take to attract more people of color to the profession of Waldorf teaching, while deepening all our adult students' understanding of issues around diversity?

On the heels of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America's June 2018 conference, at which Sunbridge alumna Linda Williams was one of two keynote presenters speaking on *Social Justice: Exploring Place, Race, Class and Gender in Waldorf Education*, Sunbridge Institute stepped firmly into this national conversation, examining what we ourselves can do to help remedy the lack of diversity within Waldorf school communities and improve the degree of racial awareness among our student population. To this end, **the Sunbridge faculty, board, and administration created the Sunbridge Institute Diversity Fund.**

Established for the purpose of expanding and promoting racial awareness and representation in our teacher education programs, this fund is designed to deepen and broaden the representation of diverse voices and perspectives that enrich the quality of a Sunbridge education, and to prepare more Waldorf teachers and leaders who reflect the broad demographic diversity of our world. Through an application process, the Diversity Fund provides scholarship awards to people of color — an underrepresented segment of our teacher education students — and also finances projects aimed at promoting awareness of racial differences and viewpoints for all within our classroom settings.

Overseeing these activities are Diversity Fund Co-Chairs Susan Howard, MA, MEd, founder and director emerita of Sunbridge's early childhood teacher education program; and Linda Williams, '87, PhD, class teacher, college co-chair, and board member at the Detroit Waldorf School and former lecturer at Sunbridge College. Joining Susan and Linda on the Diversity Fund

Scholarship Committee are Jessica Heffernan Ziegler, Sunbridge executive director; Keelah Helwig '09, kindergarten teacher and early childhood chair at The Waldorf School of Garden City; and Vicki Larson, director of communications and marketing at Green Meadow Waldorf School. Applications for Diversity Fund scholarships for Sunbridge Early Childhood and Elementary Teacher Education program students are available each February 1.

Please join us in supporting this new initiative by [making a gift](#) to the Sunbridge Institute Diversity Fund or by becoming a sustaining donor with a recurring monthly or quarterly gift. By donating to Sunbridge you affirm your stake in keeping Sunbridge Institute on the forefront of responding to the challenges of our times and meeting the interests and needs of our Waldorf communities.



When human beings meet together seeking the spirit with unity of purpose then they will also find their way to each other. ~ Rudolf Steiner