

# Commitment to Diversity

## Summer 2021

### Transportation

This summer CRI began a pilot to provide free transportation for youth to join any program at CRI—from one week programs teaching basic introduction to participation to competitive programs. In our evaluation of our role in providing equitable access to transportation and identifying how we can best serve “transportation deserts” to get Boston’s youth to the boathouse, we learned the impact of lack of access of our city’s youth to transportation doesn’t affect one program here—it affects all our youth programs. We will continue this program into the fall, including the transition from staff driving vans to contracting with a bus company to begin offering regularly scheduled busses (and to be able to manage higher volume of participants) to travel to and from CRI on a regular schedule weekdays and Saturdays. More information will be forthcoming in this area.

### Breaking Down Silos

We have begun a significant transformation of our youth programming. No longer will our BPS programs be separated from our organizational program offerings. Under the leadership of our Youth Development staff, kids from across the Boston area are rowing in all CRI youth programs without identification or sequestration. We’ve promoted our financial aid offerings across CRI to ensure cost is not an inhibiting factor for registration and our staff are broadening their outreach and recruiting into a broader array of communities. This reorganization of our youth programs will be the basis for continuing conversations and changes from everything from more clarity on the focus of our youth programs to how to increase access for youth across the Boston area, regardless of background, ability, or experience.

## **Free meals for youth served at CRI**

In partnership with the Mayor's office, SummerEats, Project Bread, the Greater Boston YMCA, and Boston Public School Food and Nutrition Services, CRI provided daily meals to young people coming for programs in July and August. The program was so successful that CRI will begin offering free after school snacks and pre- and post-nutrition free of charge to all youth coming to row at the Harry Parker Boathouse. The investment in free food for youth will be similar to our approach to providing transportation—it will involve zero cost to the participants and be accessible without any form of registration or identification of need.

## **Summer Pilots with the Let's Row Fellows program; Programming with Boston Centers for Youth and Families and with the Boston Parks and Recreation**

With the success of these programs and firming of our relationship with these Boston-based partners, CRI will continue to evaluate how we can strengthen our offerings and connections for summer programming. The Fellows program was a resounding success with the four Fellows returning to their schools this fall with stronger connections to water rowing and context to bridge the gap between providing access to rowing on indoor machines at schools and the opportunities for access at the Harry Parker Boathouse and the Charles River. CRI served over 750 Boston youth this summer through the field trips offered BCYF partners and through our learn to row programs with the parks and recreation departments.

## **Supporting our Staff**

In our efforts to continue to expand access and equity to support greater professionalization of our staff, we now offer performance reviews for our full time staff and also have made them available for part time staff. We have a number of long-term part time coaches and staff who have earned the privilege of access to professional feedback and support of their growth at CRI—we recognize both these long-time champions of CRI as well as any part time member of our staff. Additionally, we are completing a pay equity effort that will provide adjustments in compensation to staff including ensuring that all full time staff salaries begin at a minimum of \$50,000 annually, that CRI is providing cost of living increases to staff where appropriate, and to

continue to critically evaluate compensation of all full and part time staff that is transparent, equitable, and reflective of our commitment to pay our staff a living wage in Boston.

**Early summer was filled with implementation as we returned to full operations.** To that end, below are some additional initiatives CRI has undertaken that have been the effort of our senior leadership and staff. We are making progress toward making CRI more diverse by laying some of the foundational work and exploring opportunities to engage new and non-traditional communities with rowing at CRI. The primary headers are focused around the architecture of CRI's diversity efforts outlined last August.

### **Allyship**

- **Support of the River Boat clubs:** CRI is joining with other Charles River Boat clubs, which are discussing diversity in the Charles River rowing community, to explore the way we can support and advance the efforts of clubs on the river to engage our whole community—Boston and Cambridge. The group has begun exploring ideas as a way to gauge where we are at this point as a holistic community and where we collectively want to move toward.

### **Community Connection**

- **Juneteenth Observation:** As many know, the observation of Juneteenth was signed by the President as a recognized federal holiday a few days before the actual day of observation. CRI promoted its support of the Juneteenth holiday and will include Juneteenth as an observed holiday starting June of 2022.

- **Free COVID vaccination program hosted at CRI:** CRI partnered with the Cambridge Innovation Center to provide free vaccines to the Allston Brighton and surrounding community on Wednesday June 30. We promoted the program to a broad array of community groups, elected officials and local organizations in addition to communicating via our social media and ongoing media channels. We were pleased to see members of the Allston Brighton community come to CRI and explore the building while receiving their free vaccine.

### **Diversifying CRI**

- **Alignment of grant funded and fee for service youth recreation rowing programs**
- **Free programming for Boston youth**
- **Middle School Fellows Program**