

# Commitment to Diversity

## Summer 2022

It's been an amazing summer so far—we are back into full summer programming relative to 2019 and the reconnection to our community on the water has been simply humbling. We are operating at a sustainable pace, are standing on a strong foundation re-built over the past two years, and are experiencing the joys and challenges of the return of our community to the water.

Over the past 12 months, we have been exploring means to go beyond inclusion as a practice or policy and begin implementing the kind of equity and diversity we aspire to embody. We have reallocated structural resources, like money dedicated to [transportation and food initiatives](#), to become more inclusive, equitable, and diverse. As mentioned in previous posts, our mission is to welcome into our community those who have been disenfranchised or excluded from rowing based on their background, experience or ability. To date, these efforts include transportation, food access, swimming lessons, and programmatic restructuring to enable greater choice among programs.

In this post, we are going to outline another important pillar of equity at CRI, **Organizational Equity**. We believe an organizational commitment to equity knits together the many disparate projects, pilots, and initiatives in programs and operations we've undertaken. While various initiatives are likely to evolve based on the outcomes they deliver, our commitment to Organizational Equity is intended to have lasting change on everyone reached by CRI and our mission.

Coming out of COVID and hitting full throttle after a two-year hiatus has been a challenge for us all—rowers, coaches, parents, staff, vendors, regattas, and more. Our community, like the broader Boston and rowing community, reflects many changes that have occurred over the past two years in people's attitudes, behaviors, and expectations toward their work, toward each other, and toward CRI. Over recent months, CRI has been asked to fully and quickly re-staff and re-open as a better, stronger organization. For example, we expanded our staffing levels

this summer to exceed 130 staff. In comparison, this time last year we had 59 staff and in 2019, 111 staff at this time. We committed to keeping our full-time workforce stable throughout 2021 and 2022. The surge in staff reflects the number of part-time coaches needed to support summer programs and our commitment to more fully staff programs so the rower and coach experience is enriched with more support.

Over 98% of our community has their experience shaped by a member of our staff (a coach!). Because of this, we believe that the most tangible means for our community to experience our commitment to our [core values](#) is to experience them through the behavior and words of our coaches, and the multitude of decisions they make every day on behalf of our community. We are dedicated to engendering an organizational culture of trust in the decision-making in our staff, and as part of our work towards organizational equity, we are committed to training and supporting all of our staff—as individuals and as professionals—so that they have the knowledge and skills to make decisions that reflect our mission and priorities. Articulating a clear and shared collection of professional expectations is another important organizational equity goal that we believe will enhance a culture of trust among staff. As we continue to invest in becoming more inclusive, equitable, and diverse as an organization, we will continue to invest in learning, reflecting, and advancing ourselves as individuals and professionals.

Our commitment to organizational equity requires changes like updated DEI statements, revisions to policies and procedures for rowers or coaches, but it also requires intentional focus on supporting our community as it evolves toward shifting mindsets that lead to new behaviors and outcomes. For 2022 we forecasted and have committed over \$150,000 for staff training and education including:

- Approximately 30 hours of paid classroom and online trainings and coach education for each new staff member
- Diversity dialogues and round tables for staff and members of the board of directors, and a new forum for dialogue between board members, senior staff, and full-time staff
- Free online course work for any full-time staff member, including a free management training course delivered by UC San Diego School of Business
- Professional development opportunities for all staff including ride-alongs with senior staff, feedback opportunities, [IRL](#) round tables, and more
- Career support for any coach from a full time [Senior Manager of Coaching Education](#) and part-time Assistant Manager of Coaching

We are grateful and fortunate to be in a position in which we can commit so many resources (our people, our time, and our money) to the training and development of our coaches and staff. This has been done in addition to the pay equity work already completed to ensure that all full-time coaches and managers are paid equitably and make a living wage in Boston; in 2022 CRI committed to a minimum \$50K annual income for management and head coach positions. And, like good athletes, our best employees seek greater accountability, ever higher professional development opportunities, and expression of high expectations for how we treat one another and those in our community—we see these as amazing opportunities for individual professional development and overall organizational growth.

We believe the path forward for CRI to continue becoming more organizationally equitable is through support and improvement of the decision-making of our staff, supporting their journey as professionals and agents of change toward greater inclusion, diversity, and equity in rowing and by holding them to high standards. We trust in them every day to keep our community safe, and we, together, will keep expanding the ways to grow and learn together, making CRI more inclusive, equitable, and diverse.

The changes necessary for the growth of our staff and for CRI happen just like they happen for our rowers—among each of us working together toward collective goals but individually, one person, one stroke at a time.