

# Recent Events on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice in Land Conservation

In 2020, with support from the full board, several Newton Conservators' board members formed a "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice" team (DEIJ). This team has been working to review our organization's mission, values, and goals, which include making our open spaces and organization open and welcoming to all. Here are some resources from two recent events the team attended:



## Advancing Racial Justice, Equity, and Inclusion for Land Trusts

Sponsored by the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition, September- October 2021

Dr. Neenah Estrella-Luna (<https://starluna.net/>) led this three-part learning collaborative. To encourage putting the workshops' lessons into action, each organization was asked to send at least two representatives. The Conservators' DEIJ team worked together on the homework assignments and is now discussing concrete goals and actions for the board to consider.

### Topics covered included:

- the intersecting histories of land conservation and racial injustice
- the implications for land conservation of systemic displacement and residential segregation
- identifying historically excluded and oppressed populations within or near each organization's service area
- reviewing how each organization's structures, policies, and programs may foster exclusion and inequity, and how to change that

A more complete list of topics is available from the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition's website: <https://massland.org/programs/workshops>.

### Diversifying Your Nonprofit Board

Sponsored by the Charles River Chamber of Commerce, September 29, 2021

One key takeaway from this panel discussion was that building a diverse board requires more than appointing new board members: it also requires building authentic, everyday working relationships with diverse communities. The panelists included staff and board members of color affiliated with Boston-area diversity consulting firms, the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network, the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts, and Newton's own New Art Center.

Links to additional details and resources from these two events are available on the Newton Conservators' website's "News" page: <https://newtonconservators.org/news/> ♦

✍ Alice Ingerson