

## EQUITY AMPLIFIER

Asset Funders Network’s Equity Amplifier for Economic Security (EA) is a new series highlighting organizations or nonprofits focused on building economic security/asset building in communities of color. EA’s intent is to:

- **Amplify** the voices of organizations led by people of color.
- **Reduce** systemic biases and barriers within philanthropy.
- **Encourage** AFN membership to broaden and deepen their commitment to supporting economic security and asset building strategies that target diverse communities.

EQUITY AMPLIFIER IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY JPMORGAN CHASE & CO., METLIFE FOUNDATION, AND TRUIST FOUNDATION.

## Habitat for Humanity St. Tammany West



### Where are you headquartered?

Mandeville, LA

### What is your organization's mission or vision?

Our stated vision is simple: a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Through home construction, individualized counseling and education, access to down payment assistance, truly affordable mortgages, and post-purchase services, we choose to focus specifically on providing the opportunity for homeownership to low-income, underserved, and typically first-generation homebuyers who have been excluded from this opportunity and its immediate and long-term benefits.

### Which best describes your organization?

Community Improvement

### Does your organization identify as a BIPOC led? What does that look like within your organization?

We are in the midst of intentional change in this area. Our newly elected Board Chair is the first Black person to hold that position in the organization’s 42-year history, and half of our Board’s Officers are BIPOC. Just four years ago, that number for the entire board was one.

**Provide an example of a program or initiative that your organization is spearheading that works to advance economic opportunity and prosperity for BIPOC communities?**

In 2023, we convened the Advancing Black Homeownership Advisory Group to spearhead our Advancing Black Homeownership Initiative. With roots in our community's largest historically underserved Black neighborhood, our programs organically developed in order to address the most common barriers to Black homeownership. The missing piece was current, meaningful inclusion of the voices of the people we serve. Our goal with this initiative was to begin to remedy that by creating an advisory group of Black community members and leaders, placing their voices at the center of this initiative. The enriching conversations held throughout 2023 provided valuable insights to inform our ongoing efforts as we strive to close the racial homeownership gap.

**How does your work impact communities and populations that are historically marginalized, underserved and/or under-resourced?**

Through access to truly affordable homeownership, families who have been systematically excluded can enjoy its physical, emotional, and financial advantages, and begin paving the way for the accumulation of generational wealth.

**Social Media**



**What are some specific barriers or biases from within philanthropic organizations that you believe are hindering BIPOC led or BIPOC serving organizations in accessing adequate funding or support?**

Power dynamics intertwine with narrow funding criteria, which often do not account for the full context of the problems being addressed, the human and technology infrastructure required to adequately address them, or both. Less prescriptive, multi-year funding, developed through relationships founded on mutual respect, transparency, and collaboration, would not only help organizations carry out their missions today but have breathing room to innovate and strengthen themselves to build on that success.

**Name one thing funders need to be cognizant of when connecting or partnering with BIPOC led or organizations and communities?**

The complex problems we address have deep, systemic roots. Funders need to prioritize understanding the unique needs and perspectives of the communities served, ensuring their support aligns with those needs.

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## HOW FUNDERS CAN GET INVOLVED

As a benefit of AFN membership, funders may nominate local nonprofits focused on building economic security/asset building in communities of color to highlight as part of the EA series, allowing your organization to showcase innovative models and best practices to help build a more secure future for diverse communities. [Click here](#) for more information or to nominate an organization or nonprofit led by people of color for the AFN EA.

**Funders who wish to learn more about Habitat for Humanity - St. Tammany West go to [www.habitatstw.org](http://www.habitatstw.org)**