



EQUITY AND JUSTICE FOR THE AUTISTIC COMMUNITY

As an all Autistic-run organization, Foundations for Divergent Minds recognizes the disparities for autistic people run deep. In education, healthcare, housing, jobs and community, our needs are frequently unmet. When you add in the intersection of race, sexuality, gender, class and other disabilities, these disparities stop being proverbial cracks to fall through and instead are deep chasms that seem impossible to cross.

We started with an important purpose. As our board member, Kassiane Asasumasu, has put it, we have a vision that “maybe breaking us isn’t inevitable.” While this started with a way to support autistic and neurodivergent children in schools, at home and in the community, we don’t believe that’s the only way we can serve our communities. We are an organization built primarily by Black, Indigenous and Autistics of color. We are an organization of transgender and gender nonconforming people. We are an organization that relies on government services to live and support our families. We are an organization of multiply neurodivergent, multiply disabled people.

We are also an organization with decades of experience in the Autistic community. We have been part of larger Autistic organizations either as staff, volunteers or board members. We have witnessed our community’s triumphs and missteps. Most of all, we see the gaps that need to be filled. We see the chasms that need to be bridged. We believe we can help.

It is with this that we are pleased to announce our first partnership. We are proud to be partnering with the [National Disability Rights Network](#) and [John Hopkins Disability Health Research Center](#) on a project, funded by the [WITH Foundation](#), to enhance equitable access to healthcare and vaccine distribution for Black, Indigenous and people of color with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This is only a small part of what we are hoping to achieve this year for our community.

As we expand, we will uphold the culture we expect in others. This is reflected in our workplace policies and in the projects and programs we pursue. We are dedicated to not only seeking equity from society at large but being an example of how it can be done. Most of all, we are happy that we can begin to give back to the community that has helped us all through the years.