

What Matters

TRIANGLE COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Let's define equity: **Equity is a state in which all people in a given society share equal rights and opportunities.** Many of us tend to interchange the terms diversity, inclusion and equity. But I love this analogy – if diversity is being invited to the dance, and inclusion is being asked to dance, then equity is being asked to host the dance.

It can be a challenging topic to broach, but one that many of our friends in the philanthropic and nonprofit field are embracing. In fact, this morning many of you joined us at the opening sessions where we talked about how our donors and nonprofit leaders are working to address issues of equity in their own giving and work.

As a general funder, we know that we have a wide spectrum of interests, ideologies and charitable philosophies, and speaking up about **this issue** can be risky. But **I believe** that we can have conversations about who we **really** are as a community, who lives here, what access to opportunity looks like here, and learn from it. That we can use these conversations to educate ourselves, and as Jim said earlier, focus on what we are **FOR**, rather than against.

Because...

We are FOR children and families of **all races, economic backgrounds and ethnicities** having **food** in their bellies so that they can focus at school and work and meet their milestones for success.

We are FOR **every child** who sits in a classroom having the adequate access to the skills it takes to learn how to **read**, so that they can be a part of our region's prosperous future.

We are FOR **all people**, regardless of where they started out in life, having access to opportunities for employment and adequate income to meet their needs, and the needs of their families.

We are FOR stable and affordable housing for **every family** in our region so that they can get a foothold in our community, and access the resources they need to thrive..

We are FOR cultural and natural resources that educate and enhance the quality of life for **everyone** in our region.

We are FOR **keeping** the Triangle the Best Place to Live – for **everyone** in the Triangle.

I have a hunch that **you** are all FOR these things too. And that when we break down the noise, and peel back the narrative that has been created for us, we see that it's not about sides. **It's about people.**

-Lori O'Keefe, President and CEO, Triangle Community Foundation

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