



Celebrate our Hyde Park

MLK COMMUNITY BUILDERS 2026



westfhcommunity.org/racial-equity/
Togetherhydeparkma.org

Celebrate our Hyde Park

MLK COMMUNITY BUILDERS- THE WHAT AND THE WHY



An annual tradition that honors the life and example of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by bringing together the multiracial, multigenerational and multicultural community of Hyde Park to be inspired to work towards becoming what Dr. King called a Beloved Community. This Forum was originally launched in 2019 by leaders of the West Fairmount Hill Community Group as it sought to build a connected and collaborative community and has since evolved as a part of Together Hyde Park, a Hyde Park based organization whose mission is to nurture an equity- and history-informed, connected, and civically empowered community, that in unity, leads purposeful change and expanded vibrance.

A Beloved Community is one that “stands for justice, and has recognition of difference without attaching difference to privilege”. In 2021, a Community Builders Award was created to acknowledge and celebrate local residents who are actively working to create the Beloved Community. The first cohort was in 2022.

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MLK COMMUNITY BUILDERS- THE 2026 COHORT



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Jay Paget

To Jay, a beloved community means a place that provides the basic needs of affordable housing, meaningful employment, and health care, as well as opportunities to freely engage in one's interests, resulting in a healthy ecosystem.

"Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men."

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Jay Paget has lived in Hyde Park since 2002 and values how the people of Hyde Park have built and sustained civic institutions where everyone is welcome to engage in the activities of the neighborhood. Whether interests align with the arts, the environment, affordable housing, the business district, veteran's support, food banks, public festivals, sports, neighborhood beautification, or historic or cultural celebrations, there is a place to engage with others who share similar interests.

He is proud to have been involved with the Hyde Park Artscene and Celebrate HP street festivals; live music at Friday Night Traffic Jam and Bridgefest in Cleary Square's Pocket Park; and helping launch the Hyde Park Creative Connector website. These activities build community because, in order for these events to happen, people must work together to design, build, and present them. When the opportunity arises to do it again, the task is easier because there is a foundation and structure to build upon.

As the community honors Dr. King, one of Jay's heroes is one of Dr. King's brilliant and fearless organizers, Bayard Rustin. Bayard was one of the chief architects of the 1963 March on Washington, with a long history of activism and operationalizing Dr. King's message of justice and non-violence. He was also an openly gay man at a time when coming out required great courage in the face of relentless persecution.



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2026



Mytsie Thevenin

“No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.”

— Dr. Martin Luther King

Mytsie Thevenin celebrates 37 years as a resident of Hyde Park and is continually reminded of the community’s warmth and inclusiveness. What she cherishes most are the local businesses and the neighbors who gather with open hearts, fostering fellowship and a strong sense of belonging.

She is humbled to have played a part in shaping Hyde Park’s vibrant community and is proud of her work with KHPB, spearheading vendor committee assignments for the Juneteenth Celebration, and serving on the HPCR NA Board. Through volunteering and sharing her time, she hopes her passion for community building resonates with others. Each effort she makes to bring people together, share ideas, and uplift others reinforces her commitment to creating a stronger, more compassionate Hyde Park and contributes to the community’s growth while celebrating its diversity.

Mytsie attended Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences. Her SHEro is Leslie-ann, her first mentor, whose teachings on the art of step and community involvement instilled in her confidence, discipline, and a deep love for serving others.

To Mytsie, the Beloved Community represents a profound vision of unity, compassion, and collective growth. It embodies the idea that all people are interconnected and that individual well-being is inextricably linked to the well-being of others. It is a community where diversity is celebrated and everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



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2026



Carolyn Tomlinson

“Even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream.”

— Dr. Martin Luther King

Carolyn Tomlinson has lived in Hyde Park for about 23 years, a place where she has matured in many ways, including in her parenting of her children. Knowing her neighbors over the years and experiencing Hyde Park’s diversity have made this community her home.

Carolyn has been active in the community through her involvement with the West Fairmount Hill Community Group helping to put together community events, and supporting families who have had personal trauma. These efforts place her in direct connection with her neighbors and allow her to hear their voices. Through this work, she gains a deeper understanding of what her community wants and how it can be made better, embodying what it means to be a community builder.

She has had many professional experiences and last attended an educational program at Waitt House.

One of her sources of inspiration is Mayor Michelle Wu, whom she admires as a woman who demonstrates consistency and life balance. She also admires her empathy with the community and the practical ways she works to uplift those who are less fortunate.

To Carolyn, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s vision of the beloved community is the absolute goal—a just and equal community rooted in love and interconnectedness. It is the kind of community she and others are working to build for their children, grounded in care, perseverance, and shared responsibility.



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2026



Randy Brinson Jr.

One of his heroes is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who continues to inspire him. Dr. King's ability to challenge the status quo and motivate others drives him to engage more deeply in community efforts. The concept of the "beloved community," as articulated by Dr. King, represents a society grounded in justice, respect, and love for one another. To him, it signifies a collective commitment to nurturing an environment where everyone feels valued and accepted. One quote from Dr. King that resonates with him is, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." This powerful message encourages him to advocate for fairness and equality and reminds him of his responsibility to address injustices in his community.

Randy Brinson Jr. has lived in Hyde Park for 13 years and truly appreciates the neighborhood's strong sense of community and diversity. The beautiful people, parks, and cultural heritage make it a vibrant place to call home. He is most proud of his involvement in community meetings, community advocacy, and youth sport clubs. Each of these experiences has allowed him to connect with residents and contribute positively to the neighborhood, from volunteering to donating.

One of his first accomplishments was working with State Rep. Rob Consalvo. During his daily travels, he noticed an oversized gun billboard advertisement located feet away from two elementary schools and one middle school. He felt this was poor advertising for youth who already deal with many daily stressors. The sight of a gun at a child's bus stop or MBTA station—the main source of transportation for some students—was absolutely wrong in many ways and clearly another distraction for young people. After conversations with community leaders and Rep. Consalvo, the billboard was taken down within two weeks.

His most recent contribution to the community has been advocating at community meetings for better healthcare in Hyde Park and for desperately needed additional resources, including EMS. After providing officials with accurate and updated data regarding delayed EMS responses and the lack of ambulances in the neighborhood, a change was made within weeks. The City of Boston's Chief of EMS implemented two additional ambulances to assist with coverage for Hyde Park. This is just the beginning.

These accomplishments reflect his commitment to fostering connections and supporting meaningful initiatives within the community. By empowering others and creating opportunities for collaboration, he aspires to strengthen the bonds that hold the neighborhood together.

Randy Brinson Jr. is a Lieutenant for Boston EMS. The last place he attended school was the National Medical Education Center, where he focused on paramedicine.



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MLK COMMUNITY BUILDERS

2026



Malika Whitley

"If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl. But whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward."

— Dr. Martin Luther King

Malika Whitley has lived in Hyde Park for fourteen years and values most the deep sense of connection among neighbors. Hyde Park is a place where people genuinely show up for one another, blending history, culture, and community.

She is proud of organizing and supporting community-based events that bring residents, veterans, and families together in meaningful ways. She is also proud of her advocacy work connecting people to mental health resources and her involvement with local organizations that uplift youth, veterans, and underserved populations. These efforts reflect her belief that healing happens best in community, not isolation. By creating spaces for connection, dialogue, and mutual support, she helps strengthen trust and belonging across Hyde Park.

Malika Whitley is a community psychologist and doctoral scholar. She completed and formally defended a portion of her doctoral work in Community Care and Counseling (Traumatology) through a doctoral program based in Virginia, with aspects of the research intentionally withheld due to the sensitivity and trauma-related nature of the subject matter.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is a central source of inspiration for her because he modeled leadership grounded in compassion, courage, and collective responsibility. His vision reminds her that community service is both a moral commitment and an act of love. To Malika, the beloved community is a space where people choose unity, dignity, and shared responsibility—even when there is disagreement. It is about showing up for one another, repairing harm, and working together toward justice and collective well-being.



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2026



Cathy Horn

A quote from Dr. King that continues to guide her reflects this steady commitment: "If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward."

Cathy Horn is a longtime Hyde Park resident and community leader. She has called Hyde Park home for 22 years and is drawn to its small-town feel, strong public transportation connections to Boston, and easy access to nature and green spaces. She earned her degree from Boston University and has continued her learning through certificates from Bentley University and the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health.

Over the years, Cathy has been deeply involved in shaping and strengthening the neighborhood she loves. It began with her co-leadership of the West Fairmount Hill Community Group (WFH). In 2017, she founded Keep Hyde Park Beautiful and continues to lead the group's efforts to care for and uplift the community. She has also served on the board of Hyde Park Main Streets for more than a decade and is a member of the advisory group for the Hyde Park Creative Connector, a platform that highlights the area's rich arts and cultural life and makes it visible and accessible to all. For Cathy, being a community builder begins with recognizing the many assets already present in Hyde Park—its local businesses, natural spaces, and vibrant arts scene—and seeing the potential to build on those strengths. By bringing together people who share a love for the community, networks form, and from those networks grow belonging, purpose, and connection.

One of her closest sources of inspiration is fellow community leader Marcia Kimm-Jackson, with whom she serves alongside in WFH. As their paths of engagement have grown alongside one another, Cathy finds encouragement in Marcia's dedication and accomplishments. In moments of exhaustion or discouragement, she is reminded that she is not alone in the challenges and rewards of pouring heart and soul into work meant to benefit the community.

The idea of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "beloved community" resonates deeply with Cathy as a feeling of gratitude and belonging. Hyde Park's diversity means many residents are not originally from the neighborhood and may see it simply as a place they live. Cathy believes that what unites everyone is the shared reality of being here now. By recognizing, appreciating, and protecting the people, businesses, and green spaces that define Hyde Park, residents move from merely living in a place to truly belonging to it. That, to her, is how a beloved community is built.



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MLK COMMUNITY BUILDERS

2026



**Marinell
Rousmaniere**

“Dr King spoke of the goal of the beloved community that would require a qualitative change in our heart and a quantitative change in our lives to make it a reality. I feel the former is the transformative and personal... The quantitative is the actual work that I do in my community to help make that goal a reality.”

Marinell Rousmaniere has lived in Hyde Park for 22 years, where she has been a ready volunteer for community events and engaged for more than a decade as a parent at the Roosevelt K-8 School. Hyde Park's diversity of history, people, and places makes her proud to call this neighborhood home.

Marinell Rousmaniere is the President and CEO of EdVestors, bringing more than 25 years of experience in youth development and education to her role of improving access to opportunities and outcomes for students across Boston. Previously, Marinell served as Executive Director of MYTOWN, a creative youth development organization connecting teens to Boston's diverse history, where the story of Martin Luther King's 1965 march from Carter Playground to Boston Common, and testimony that led to the Racial Imbalance Act was learned and shared with hundreds of people each year. MLK's commitment to and words about education inspire her: The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.

A first generation college student, Marinell is a proud graduate of Connecticut College. She also holds an MBA in public and nonprofit management from Boston University.



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MLK COMMUNITY BUILDERS

2026



Dana Rousmaniere

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”
— Dr. Martin Luther King

Dana Rousmaniere has been a resident of Hyde Park for more than 22 years, living both in Sunnyside and on Fairmount Hill. What Dana values most about Hyde Park is its diversity in all dimensions—people, places, and experiences. The ability to walk through neighborhoods, cross the river, move from the business district into wooded spaces, and encounter people from all walks of life and from across the world is what makes Hyde Park so special. Raising a family in such a richly diverse and connected community has been a true blessing.

Dana has been deeply involved in the Hyde Park community for many years and takes great pride in that service. As a coach and board member of Hyde Park Jr. AA Baseball for 15 years, Dana treasures the relationships built with local youth—moments like hearing “Hi Coach Dana!” called out from a passing car capture the heart of that connection. Dana has also served for more than a decade on the Hyde Park Main Streets Board, supporting local businesses that strengthen the neighborhood’s economic and social fabric. In addition, as a parent of two children who attended the Roosevelt School, Dana has remained actively engaged in the Hyde Park school community. Through these roles, Dana embodies community building by forming strong, lasting relationships and fostering engagement across shared physical, economic, and social spaces.

Dana is a graduate of Connecticut College and the Boston University School of Management. This work reflects a belief in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s vision of the beloved community—a recognition of deep interconnectedness and a commitment to nurturing those bonds, especially in times of challenge.



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Patricia Alvarez

*"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."
— Dr. Martin Luther King*

Patricia Alvarez is a founding member of the Southwest Boston CDC and currently serves as Assistant Director/Director of Green Initiatives. She has lived in Hyde Park for 30 years and treasures the neighborhood's strong sense of community, unity among residents, and the activism that spans a broad range of issues. She is especially committed to Hyde Park's conservation land and to protecting it so it can, in turn, protect the community.

For more than 25 years, Patricia has worked alongside Hyde Park residents on numerous initiatives. Among the most impactful was the Hyde Park Arts Initiative (2003–2006), which helped artists connect with one another, gain visibility, and create opportunities to sell their work. This effort led to Artscene, the annual outdoor art festival in Logan Square, which ran from 2004–2014 and helped establish Hyde Park as a recognized arts community.

She also played a key role in the Hyde Park Community Resources Committee (2006–2013), which brought residents and service providers together to address health needs, youth programs, senior outreach, food and housing insecurity, and disaster response, including support for Haiti's earthquake survivors. The committee conducted a community needs assessment with UMass Boston, created a services directory, and organized resource fairs serving hundreds of residents.

Another cornerstone of her work is the Green Team youth jobs and environmental stewardship program, which for 17 years has employed Boston teens to restore Hyde Park's conservation land while teaching climate education, leadership, conflict resolution, and workforce skills.

Patricia holds a Master's in Social Work with a concentration in Community Organizing, Management, and Planning from the University of Connecticut. She draws inspiration from the many mentors, organizers, unions, and residents who taught her—and whom she taught—that community change happens when people work together.

To her, the beloved community is one where people of different ages, races, cultures, languages, and incomes live, work, and care for one another without undermining one another.



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Banners featuring the 2026 MLK Community Builders cohort can be found on display at the Boston Public Library, year-round.

Scan the QR code on the banners to learn more about them.

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