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“

It's enough of us here to
bring the spiritual energy.
It's enough of us here to
move mountains. ”

TEQUILA JOHNSON
Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director, The Equity Alliance



Dear friends,

We hope you are all healthy and well as we start the second year of this pandemic, and enter the final days of springtime. Here at the Amplify Fund, we are staying focused, motivated and inspired by the work of movement leaders across the country, like Tequila Johnson (Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director of the Equity Alliance in Nashville, TN) who reminds us that “it’s enough of us here to bring the spiritual energy. It’s enough of us here to move mountains”.

Since we don’t get to bump into each other at conferences, events, or airports like we used to, we’re sharing updates and highlights about:

- Grantmaking and Programs
- Staff and Members
- Plus links to great content sprinkled throughout!

Feel free to forward this email to any colleagues or partners that might be interested, and don’t hesitate to reach out with any questions about how to get more involved with our community here at Amplify. Along with the full team at NFG we urge you to fully resource work that centers the lives, safety, and success of Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities.

In solidarity, Amy, Melody and Nicole -- the Amplify team



View the [full list of Amplify grantees here](#), and listen to many grantees speak about their work in [this video](#)

GRANTMAKING & PROGRAMS

One of Amplify's guiding values from the beginning has been "do what works for grantees" in our grantmaking and programmatic work. So, we have prioritized making our grantmaking processes simple and clear (thank you [JustFund!](#)) and we have designed our learning and wrap-around programs based on what we've heard directly from grantees.

GRANTMAKING:

While the majority of Amplify funds are distributed as general operating support grants, in 2020, we offered two additional grants to our core [grantee partners](#): 1) COVID-19 relief grants; and 2) Wellness grants. Grantees used the \$5,000 COVID relief grants in various ways to address immediate organizational needs during the pandemic (including technology upgrades, mutual aid, campaign support). As for the \$3,000 end-of-year wellness grants, we distributed those to all grantees with no strings attached. We heard that organizations used them for holiday staff bonuses, paid time off, extra security measures at offices, therapy sessions for frontline organizers, and a wide-range of body wellness activities like yoga, massage and exercise (all COVID-safe). In 2021, we will continue making core general operating support grants and starting this summer we will offer an opportunity for additional individual or collaborative capacity building dollars.



BEYOND GRANTMAKING:

We offer peer learning and exchange among grantees and training opportunities with trusted providers, networks, and partners. To date we offered a series of nine Amplification sessions. Attendance is optional for all sessions, and content is delivered in English with simultaneous Spanish interpretation.

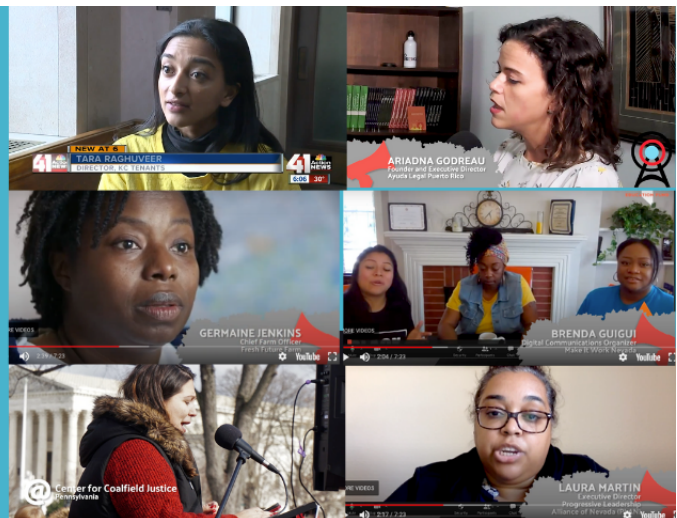
- Two sessions in April for grantees to discuss needs and to share stories, ideas and resources about coping with the pandemic;
- Two sessions, one in June and one in September, to share Amplify resources with grantees, hear input about how to use the shared Amplification time and capacity building resources.
- One session in July with [Social Movement Technologies \(SMT\)](#) for Amplify grantees to meet requests we heard for new digital organizing skills through Organizing During Social Distancing and Beyond training.
- One session in November for grantees to reflect on the end of the year, share space and debrief post- election.
- A three-part Financial Resilience series in February, March, and April with [Michael Anderson Consulting](#) covering the fundamentals of nonprofit finance, setting financial strategies, and building financial resilience. Grantees have the opportunity to meet with Michael for private one-on-one technical assistance and coaching sessions.

Additional opportunities for grantees:

- Trainings led by the [Center for Story-based Strategy](#), a national movement-building organization dedicated to harnessing the power of narrative for social change. Opportunities range from 90-minute self-paced sessions to 30-hour trainings.
- Trainings and coaching hours by Social Movement Technologies focused on digital organizing and campaign skills, including an upcoming Amplification session and SMT's 9-month Digital Campaign Certificate Program (starting again in fall 2021).
- Additional opportunities are shared in Amplify's open source resource list and grantees are always welcome to reach out to Amplify staff and local site consultants to request additional technical assistance resources.

As Amplify staff and consultants our goal is absolutely to “do what works for grantees”. When we make mistakes, we pivot quickly and when we do something right, we build from there. At the end of 2020 we received an unsolicited email from David Dwight IV, Executive Director and Lead Strategy Catalyst at Forward Through Ferguson saying “we so appreciate the way you all live into justice- and human-centered philanthropy.” So, we take that to mean we’re doing some things just right!

Watch our short video to hear directly from Amplify grantees about their work!





“

Meshie Knight has been a wonderful addition to the Steering Committee. She brings a unique voice given her deep background in public health and a strong equity stance. We are thrilled to have the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation at the Amplify table. ”

AMY MORRIS
Director, Amplify Fund

In December 2020, we were thrilled to welcome Meshie Knight as a new Steering Committee member representing the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Dennis Quirin from the Raikes Foundation (formerly of our very own NFG!) and Liz Sak from Cricket Island Foundation as our first two learning members! And in May 2021, Susan Sandler Fund joined the Amplify Fund. While we are still looking forward to the day when we can all break bread together, it has been such a joy to see new faces in our Zoom meetings.

To get to know more about us -- staff, steering committee and learning members -- we encourage you to browse through these recordings:

- Hear from Amplify Steering Committee member Rini Banerjee of the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation, Amplify Senior Program Officer Melody Baker and North & South Carolina site consultant Chi-Ante Singletary in the recording of our December panel discussion [Get it Together: How the Amplify Fund Supports Black-led Power Building and Organizing](#).
- Hear from Amplify Steering Committee member Jerry Maldonado of the Ford Foundation, Dimple Abichandani from General Service Foundation and (former Amplify Steering Committee member) Renata Peralta from the Open Society Foundations talk about [Accountability & Philanthropy's Role in the plenary session from NFG's 2020 National convening series](#).
- Hear from Amplify Senior Program Officer, Melody Baker, and our partners at JustFund and the Amalgamated Charitable Foundation in this session about [Removing Barriers to Transformational Philanthropy in Response to COVID-19 & Beyond](#).

In our time together as staff and steering committee members, we are continuing our culture of racial justice work with [OpenSource Leadership Strategies](#) and thanks to the leadership of [Frontline Solutions](#) continuing to learn from self-evaluation based on principles of “[equitable evaluation](#)”. We look forward to sharing updates with you about both processes in coming months.

Join us ...

In supporting amazing organizations while learning and changing the status quo in philanthropy along the way!

and, follow us too

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MISSOURI FOUNDATION FOR HEALTH
MORIAH FUND
OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS
ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION
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Connecting people, place and power