



Diversity and Equity Statement

At Arts in Motion Studio (AiMS), West Michigan, a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace is one where all employees, volunteers, students, and their friends and families, regardless of physical or cognitive ability or degree, extent, or nature of disability, race, ethnicity, national origin, gender or gender expression, age, height, weight, sexual orientation or identity, education, or income, feel valued and respected.

AiMS is an equal opportunity employer committed to a nondiscriminatory approach. We comply with all federal and state laws against employment discrimination and follow all regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Our non-discrimination policy applies to all qualified individuals and includes the application process, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, and all other terms, conditions, privileges, and aspects of employment.

At the heart of our mission is the goal of creating for individuals with disabilities unprecedented levels of access to the arts, that all persons might experience the transforming power of creation. We meet each of our students where they are, with all that they bring with them.

We see diversity, inclusion, and equity as connected to our mission and critical to ensure the well-being of our staff, students, volunteers, and their friends and family. We recognize the present history of racism and anti-Blackness in our communities and its compounding effects on Black and brown students with disabilities. We respect and value the diverse life experiences, abilities, and heritages and ensure that all voices are welcomed and heard.

With our own facilities and resources, and whenever we are in a position to influence, we strive to dismantle oppressive systems by developing internal and external policies, programs, and procedures that lead to racial equity as an integral part of our work towards destigmatizing disability. To model diversity and inclusion for the nonprofit sector and provide informed, authentic leadership for cultural equity in Grand Rapids, Arts in Motion Studio works intentionally to:

- Acknowledge and dismantle any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services
- Explore potential underlying, unquestioned assumptions that interfere with inclusiveness
- Advocate for and support board-level thinking about how systemic inequities impact our organization's work, and how best to address them for the betterment of our mission
- Help to challenge assumptions about what it takes to be a strong leader at our organization, and who is well-positioned to provide leadership
- Practice and encourage transparent and accessible communication in all interactions
- Commit time and resources to achieve diverse leadership within our internal staff and board
- Commit time to seek and utilize resources to intentionally engage disabled communities of color to increase the diversity among our students, staff, board, vendors, volunteers, and partnerships
- Lead with respect and acceptance by expecting all employees to embrace this notion and express it in workplace interactions and through everyday practices



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Arts in Motion Studio abides by the following action items to help promote diversity and inclusion in our workplace:

- Prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion strategy in the development of our 3-year plan beginning August 20, 2023. This plan will be shared on our website once complete.
- Expand offerings for racially underrepresented students by connecting with other organizations committed to diversity and inclusion efforts
- Encourage students to explore their whole selves including racial identity and ability in their creation projects
- Proactively integrate diversity, racial equity, and inclusion values into Arts in Motion Studio policies and procedures as our organization grows and expands
- Focus development efforts on philanthropic organizations with a demonstrated commitment to racial equity