

PRESS RELEASE

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United Way to Hold 21 Day Equity Challenge, Invites Rhode Islanders to Better Understand how Inequity and Racism Impact our Communities

Providence, R.I. (February 4, 2021) In alignment with the goals of its recently released [LIVE UNITED 2025](#) strategic plan, United Way of Rhode Island today opened registration for its 21 Day Equity Challenge that kicks off Wednesday, February 24. All Rhode Islanders are invited to commit 15 minutes a day to equity with the goal of understanding how inequity and racism affect our lives, our communities, and our state's ability to thrive.

"As we celebrate Black History Month, this is a powerful opportunity for everyone to join us in learning more deeply about the challenges that root inequity in our community," said Adama Brown, Ph.D., director of research and data analytics for United Way. "Education and awareness are vital, meaningful steps to truly creating justice and opportunity for all, and realizing a Rhode Island that's the best it can be. And this challenge puts that importance at the forefront."

Rhode Islanders who sign-up for the challenge – [available online](#) – will receive an email daily beginning Feb. 24 and continuing for 21 days. Each email will feature a different racial equity topic, a brief introduction, and choices to select from to spend roughly 15 minutes learning, watching, reading, or reflecting about the day's topic. The challenge is self-guided and done at each participant's own pace. People may save emails for when they have more time, and anyone can sign up after Feb. 24 and begin their 21-day journey.

Topics will include personal racial identity, implicit bias, what is privilege, the impact of racial trauma, being an ally, tools for the racial equity change process, taking action, and more. There will also be a focus on the history of racism in Rhode Island and segregation in Providence.

"Broadening our understanding of the issues of racism and how they've held back Rhode Island is instrumental in our ability to move forward," said Cortney Nicolato, United Way's president and CEO. "It's inspiring to think about the impact this challenge can begin to have if we all invest 15 minutes a day."

When it unveiled LIVE UNITED 2025 in mid-January, United Way also announced a commitment to invest \$100 million in Rhode Island to support the plan's work over the next five years. Specific focus areas include advancing childhood reading proficiency among BIPOC youth, making housing safe and affordable for all, and altering policies that perpetuate inequities for people of color. Hundreds of Rhode Island businesses, organizations, and individuals have already [signed on](#) to support United Way's mission, with the organization inviting all Rhode Islanders to join the [pledge](#) to build a Rhode Island where every individual has equal opportunity for justice and prosperity.

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United Way of Rhode Island is uniting our community and resources to build racial equity and opportunities for all Rhode Islanders. A member of the world's largest nonprofit network, we bring together individuals, business, nonprofit, community leaders and government to tackle the root causes of inequity and achieve specific, measurable goals. Our programs include 211, the statewide front door connecting Rhode Islanders with social services, resources, and vital programs. Both directly and through grants to nonprofits, we are investing to build economic opportunity, advance childhood learning, expand philanthropy, and to drive policy and participation. To learn more, visit unitedwayri.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#).