



AFRO-CARIBBEAN CULTURAL CENTER INC.

CONNECTING CULTURES • CELEBRATING HERITAGE • BUILDING COMMUNITY

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2026-2031



HONORING
OUR ROOTS



INSPIRING
CREATIVITY



EMPOWERING
FUTURES

SUPPORTED BY



NEW ENGLAND
FOUNDATION
FOR THE ARTS



artsHERE

ArtsHERE is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts
in partnership with South Arts and in collaboration with the
other five U.S. Regional Arts Organizations.

Connecticut
Community
Foundation®



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Welcome

A LETTER TO OUR COMMUNITY

“Our ancestors dreamed of a future where their descendants would not only survive—but thrive. This Strategic Framework is our promise to continue building that future together.”

Dear Friends,

The Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center (ACCC) was born from a simple yet powerful belief: every person deserves to see themselves reflected in the stories they hear, the art they experience, and the communities they call home.

What began in 2020 as a grassroots vision has grown into a dynamic cultural institution serving Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taíno communities across Connecticut. Along the way, we have become more than an arts organization. We have become a place of belonging—a center where culture is celebrated, leadership is nurtured, healing is practiced, and future generations discover the strength of their heritage.

This Strategic Framework represents far more than a planning document. It is the culmination of more than a year of listening, learning, reflection, and visioning. Guided by community voices, board leadership, staff, volunteers, and our strategic planning consultant, Amarilis Perez Pullen of Raíces Consulting, we have created a roadmap that honors our past while preparing us for the future.

Like many organizations across the country, ACCC faced unexpected challenges during this process. Shifting economic conditions and reductions in federal support for arts and cultural organizations extended our planning timeline. Yet those challenges only strengthened our resolve. Rather than rushing the process, we chose to remain steadfast, ensuring that every voice was heard and every decision reflected our mission and values.

The result is a Strategic Framework that reflects who we are today and who we aspire to become.

It is our invitation to every artist, educator, student, elder, family, volunteer, partner, donor, and community member to join us in building a future where Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taíno cultures are not simply preserved—they flourish.

Together, we will continue building a Center Without Walls. Together, we will continue preserving culture, inspiring leadership, and creating opportunities for generations to come.

Rafael Feliciano-Roman

Rafael Feliciano-Roman
Founder & Executive Director
Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center

Nicole Delgado

Nicole Delgado
Board President
Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center



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➤ About This ➤ **STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

Strategic planning is more than producing a document. It is a process of reflection, alignment, and intentional decision-making that helps organizations clarify where they are going, how they will get there, and how success will be measured. The process undertaken by the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center was designed to **strengthen organizational sustainability** while ensuring every aspect of the organization's operations, governance, programming, and resource development aligns with its **mission and long-term vision**.

This Strategic Framework serves as ACCC's roadmap for the next five years. It reflects the **voices** of board members, staff, volunteers, partners, youth, and community stakeholders who participated in interviews, assessments, and collaborative visioning sessions. It is intended to guide organizational decision-making, prioritize investments, **strengthen partnerships**, and deepen community impact.

Throughout these pages, readers will discover not only the organization's **mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities**, but also the story of an organization that has grown from a grassroots initiative into one of Connecticut's leading Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taino cultural institutions.

Rooted in Culture. Guided by Community. Building the Future.



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Our Journey

BUILDING A HOME FOR CULTURE

Every organization has a beginning.

Some begin with buildings.

Others begin with funding.

The Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center began with a dream.

Founded in 2020 by Rafael Feliciano-Roman, ACCC emerged from a desire to create spaces where Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taíno communities could gather, celebrate their cultures, and reconnect with their histories. What started in a small apartment has grown into a vibrant cultural hub in downtown Waterbury, occupying the historic **John Bale Bookstore building** and serving as a visible symbol of representation, creativity, and community pride.

Today, ACCC is recognized not only for its arts programming but also for its role as a **bridge-builder**—connecting communities, preserving cultural traditions, supporting youth leadership, advancing restorative justice, and fostering collaboration across Connecticut. Stakeholders consistently described the organization as a **place where people find belonging, reconnect with their heritage, and build lasting relationships** through culture and shared purpose.

As the organization grew, so did the need for a clear strategic direction. Expanding programs, increasing partnerships, and rising community demand made it essential to **pause, reflect, and intentionally chart** the next chapter of ACCC's journey.

This Strategic Framework is the result of that commitment.



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Our JOURNEY

A TIMELINE OF GROWTH, CULTURE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

2020



Afro-Caribbean
Cultural Center founded.

2021



Grassroots programming
expands through community
partnerships.

2022



Growth in **youth arts/leadership**
and **cultural education**
initiatives.

2023



Increased **statewide visibility**
through arts, theater, leadership,
and **restorative justice**
programming.

2024



Strategic Planning & Discovery
Process begins with
Raíces Consulting.

2025



Stakeholder interviews,
governance assessment,
visioning sessions, and
strategic alignment continue.

2026



Adoption of the
Comprehensive Strategic
Framework for 2026–2031.

Rooted in Culture. • Guided by Community. • Building the Future.





Who We Are

IDENTITY, PURPOSE & PROMISE

“Culture is more than heritage. It is identity, belonging, resilience, and the foundation upon which communities build their future.”

Why We Exist

The Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center exists because our cultures have too often been **overlooked, misunderstood, and underrepresented**. Across Connecticut, Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taíno stories, contributions, and traditions have been left out of the narrative—despite being woven into the fabric of our communities.

We exist to change that. We are here to **celebrate who we are**, **preserve** where we come from, and create pathways for future generations to **lead, thrive**, and **transform** the world.



Representation matters.

Our stories, art, and histories deserve to be seen, heard, and valued.



Cultural preservation requires intentional investment.

We safeguard traditions while embracing innovation.



Youth need spaces where their identities are celebrated.

We nurture confidence, creativity, and leadership.



Community centers strengthen civic life.

We build bridges across communities and foster collective well-being.

“Culture connects us to our past while empowering us to shape our future.”



OUR NEW MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS

MISSION

The Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center empowers Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taíno communities through the arts, education, and activism. Through strategies that **foster youth education & self-determination, deepening community connections, and preserving Afro-Latino, Black & Taíno cultures.** While **building our organizational capacity** to uplift our community and celebrate our rich heritage with confidence and purpose across generations.

VISION

The Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center envisions a world where Afro-Latino, Caribbean, Black, and Taíno cultures **thrive** — bridging generations, preserving & respecting traditions, and empowering our communities as a cornerstone of social and cultural revitalization/restoration through **creativity, education, equity, and healing.**



Our CORE VALUES

OUR VALUES ARE...

Guided by our heritage. Rooted in community.
Driven by purpose. **We live these values
every day in all that we do.**





CREATIVITY –

We honor and celebrate Afro-Latino, Caribbean, Black, and Taíno cultures through **creative expression** within the arts that preserve and amplify our rich heritage.



DIVERSITY & EQUITY –

We are committed to fostering an **inclusive** and **equitable** community, encouraging a sense of belonging. We actively work to dismantle structural barriers and empower individuals to honor our heritage.



EDUCATION –

Rooted in Afro-Latino, Caribbean, Black, and Taíno cultures and folklore, we **empower learners** of all ages to embrace their heritage and cultural identities. Equipping the next generation with the knowledge to defend the diaspora.



RESPECT & TRADITION –

We honor our ancestors' traditions and cultural practices by **preserving** Afro-Latino Caribbean, Black, and Taíno identities, **bridging generations** through cultural wisdom, respect, and continuity.



Naming Our COMMUNITIES

At the **Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center**, we serve and uplift communities with deep cultural, historical, and ancestral ties to the Caribbean and the African diaspora. When we say **Afro-Caribbean**, **Black**, and **Taíno**, we explicitly mean:



THE CARIBBEAN

THE GREATER ANTILLES



THE MAINLAND CARIBBEAN



THE LESSER ANTILLES



Honoring the Taíno peoples, the first stewards of the Caribbean. Their spirit, wisdom, and resilience live on in our cultures, our stories, and our communities.

RACE AND ETHNICITY LANGUAGE



AFRO-CARIBBEAN

People of African descent from or with ancestral ties to the Caribbean, shaped by African, Indigenous, and European influences. This includes communities across the **Greater Antilles** (Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico), **Lesser Antilles** (Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Saint Lucia, and others), and the **mainland Caribbean** (Belize, Guyana, Suriname).



BLACK

A global identity encompassing people of African descent across the **Caribbean, North and South America, Africa, Europe**, and beyond. This includes Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latinx, African Americans, and African diaspora communities worldwide who share histories of colonialism, resistance, and cultural resilience.



TAÍNO

The Indigenous peoples of the Caribbean, primarily from the **Greater Antilles** (Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica) and parts of the **Lesser Antilles and Bahamas**. Despite colonial erasure, Taino identity endures through cultural reclamation and community recognition.

Many Roots. One Heritage. Our Future.



Our **NORTH STAR**

This is a thriving epicenter for **Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taino** people—a community rooted in cultural heritage, social justice, and inclusivity, built on trust and respect.

OUR NORTH STAR GUIDES US.

It is more than a statement—it is our commitment to the future.

It shapes our decisions, inspires our strategies, and holds us accountable to the communities we serve. When we face challenges or opportunities, we return to our North Star to ensure we stay aligned with our purpose and the impact we want to create.



IT KEEPS US FOCUSED ON:

-  Uplifting our communities with dignity and respect
-  Preserving and celebrating our cultures and histories
-  Advancing social justice and equity
-  Building inclusive spaces where we all belong and thrive

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

How Culture Becomes Community Power

ACCC believes that when communities have sustained investment in their culture, young people have opportunities to lead, and people are empowered to heal, connect, and participate in civic life, communities become stronger, more connected, and better positioned to shape their own futures.



OUR NORTH STAR

"This is a thriving epicenter for **Afro-Caribbean**, **Black**, and **Taino** people—a community rooted in cultural heritage, social justice, and inclusivity, built on trust and respect."



CULTURE IS OUR FOUNDATION • COMMUNITY IS OUR POWER • FUTURE IS OUR DESTINATION

THE ACCC CHANGE PATHWAY

Our work creates a cycle of transformation. Each step builds on the last, strengthening our communities and creating the conditions for continued growth.



THE FEEDBACK LOOP

As our communities grow stronger and more engaged, they generate new leaders, relationships, opportunities, stories, and resources—which are reinvested back into our communities, creating a cycle of continued cultural vitality and collective power.

FIVE PRINCIPLES THAT MAKE THE MODEL WORK



1. CULTURE IS INFRASTRUCTURE

Culture is an essential foundation for identity, belonging, education, healing, and community development.



2. YOUTH ARE LEADERS

Young people are cultural bearers, creators, decision-makers, and future community leaders.



3. COMMUNITY VOICE COMES FIRST

We listen to the people and communities we serve and center their voices, experiences, and aspirations.



4. PARTNERSHIPS MULTIPLY IMPACT

Collaboration with artists, educators, organizations, and institutions expands what is possible.



5. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY SUSTAINS CHANGE

Strong leadership, governance, resources, and infrastructure ensure our impact endures.

OUR ROOTS GUIDE US. OUR CULTURE STRENGTHENS US. OUR FUTURE IS OURS TO CREATE.



CORE STRATEGIC PILLARS AND SHORT-TERM / LONG-TERM GOALS

Driven by our values. Guided by our community. Building our future.



1

SOCIAL AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Change through civic engagement, community organizing, and advocacy initiatives rooted in indigenous and restorative justice practices.



OUR SHORT-TERM GOALS (OUTPUTS)

- ✓ **Circle Process:** Build a social media campaign and spark interest in the circle process, increasing participation by 25%.
- ✓ **Circle Process:** Develop a more formalized tracking system/tool to track graduated Circle Process Practitioner.
- ✓ Begin to identify and select different host locations for the Circle Process host at least 2 in two different Cities/Towns in CT.

OUR LONG-TERM GOALS (OUTCOMES)



Network of Circle Process Practitioners of at least

100 individuals



Documented amount of Youth Circle Process Practitioners of

50 youth ages 13-24



Peace circles trainings in

5 major cities in Connecticut annually

BUILDING A MOVEMENT ONE CIRCLE AT A TIME



Goal: Increase participation in Circle Process by **25%** through social media outreach.



2

YOUTH EDUCATION AND SELF-DETERMINATION

We cultivate youth-led organizing, leadership, and self-determination by centering our cultural practices and traditions via art and education.



OUR SHORT-TERM GOALS (OUTPUTS)

- ✓ Develop a committee to review the Cuyo Specialty facilitators.
- ✓ Youth co-develop Summer/Fall 2026 programming.
- ✓ Improve academic performance through monitoring of attendance rates, socio-emotional skills, and maintaining satisfactory course completion.



SHIFTING - PARTNERSHIPS AND NUMBER OF YOUTH WE WANT TO SERVE



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

TECHNICAL
5+
Partners



YOUTH TO SERVE

250+
Youth Annually



YOUTH LEADERS IN DEVELOPMENT

75+
Youth Leaders

OUR COMMITMENT. ♦ OUR CULTURE. ♦ OUR COMMUNITY. ♦ OUR POWER.



3

CULTURAL PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

We create multigenerational systems to preserve and restore Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taino cultures through arts, education, theater and performing arts and community engagement, and safeguard our traditions and heritage sites.



OUR SHORT-TERM GOALS (OUTPUTS)

- ✓ Re-launch Pa'lante's third season and partner with Seven Angels Theater and strengthen the Afro-Latino Film Festival.
- ✓ Taino: Connecting and joining Higuougua Taino of the Caribbean National Organization to assist with capacity, teachings and credibility of the Taino knowledge of ACCC.



OUR LONG-TERM GOALS (OUTCOMES)



Establish Puerto Rican Cultural Heritage District in City of Waterbury.



Deepen and operationalize partnerships with Rivera Memorial Foundation, Silas Bronson Library, UnGroup Society, Building Legacy and Community, and North End Rec Center.



Pa'lante Theater Company becomes a hub for world premiere plays and partners with local & regional theaters. Grow the Afro-Latino Film Festival to a statewide leader of independent short films.



Taino Learning Community: Become the principal authority on Taino culture and restoration.

4

BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

We leverage the tools of the ACCC to attract sustainable investments toward building our organizational capacity, ensuring our expansion and existence for future generations.



OUR SHORT-TERM GOALS (OUTPUTS)

- ✓ Secure \$15,000 to begin Endowment Fund for ACCC / \$5,000 for Pa'lante.
- ✓ Develop the Center without Walls model for existing programs and to serve as a blueprint for expansion.
- ✓ \$100,000 (\$60,000 a year Salary for CEO, \$40,000 a Year CFO) – Secure CEO & CFO Annual Funding Goal / Fundraising Goal from Board.
- ✓ Research Non-Profit Marketing and Promotion Plan and Get Quotes from 3 Marketing Agencies (Worx, BuzzEngine, and one other) // Look into Free Promotion.
- ✓ Set fundraising goal for 30 Under 30 Gala (Goal: \$25,000)

BUILDING A STRONG FINANCIAL FUTURE



\$150,000+

ENDOWMENT GOAL

Create financial sustainability by investing in our future.



SUSTAINABILITY



LEADERSHIP



GROWTH



IMPACT

OUR LONG-TERM GOALS (OUTCOMES)



Build an endowment fund of at least \$150,000.



Secure funding to pay a full-time Executive Director & CFO, Fund Development.



Marketing and Promotion Plan.



Cultivate and establish high-dollar donors and funders / Diversify funding streams.



30 Under 30 Gala / Awards strengthen and ensure this is a statewide event.



Many Roots. One Heritage. Our Future.



TURNING VISION INTO ACTION



A strategic framework is not simply a list of projects—it's a guide for decision-making, resource allocation, and long-term impact. This framework ensures that everything we do is connected, intentional, and aligned with our mission and our North Star.



OUR NORTH STAR

This is a thriving epicenter for Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taíno people—a community rooted in cultural heritage, social justice, and inclusivity, built on trust and respect.



MISSION

OUR PURPOSE. Why we exist and who we serve.

We empower Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taíno communities through arts, culture, education, and advocacy to preserve our heritage, advance equity, nurture leadership, and build stronger communities.



NORTH STAR

OUR GUIDING LIGHT. Where we are going.

Our North Star inspires every decision we make, keeps us aligned, and reminds us of the future we are building—together.



THEORY OF CHANGE

OUR ROADMAP. How change happens.

Our Theory of Change shows the pathways that connect our work to lasting impact.



CORE STRATEGIC PILLARS

OUR FOCUS. What we prioritize.

Four interconnected pillars strengthen our organization and move us closer to our North Star.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| | | | |
| 1. SOCIAL AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE | 2. YOUTH EDUCATION AND SELF-DETERMINATION | 3. CULTURAL PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION | 4. BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY |
| Building peace, advocacy, and community power. | Cultivating leaders and empowering youth to shape their future. | Honoring our heritage and strengthening our cultural traditions. | Strengthening our systems, resources, and sustainability for generations to come. |



COMMUNITY IMPACT

OUR COMMITMENT. The impact we create together.

When we align our mission, our goals, and our actions, we build thriving, resilient, and culturally rooted communities today and for generations to come.



ONE FRAMEWORK. ONE COMMUNITY. ONE FUTURE. TOGETHER.



AFRO
CARIBBEAN
CULTURAL
CENTER

Center Without Walls

STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION Roadmap

Our Strategic Framework becomes reality when we take intentional steps, stay accountable, and work together. This five-year roadmap guides our journey from vision to measurable impact.



YEAR ONE

Build the Foundation



MILESTONES

- Build infrastructure
- Strengthen governance
- Expand partnerships
- Streamline programming and strengthen current programs (Cuyo, Pa'lante, Circle Process, Taino Learning)

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- Stronger organizational systems and structures
- Increased partner alignment
- Clearer, more effective program delivery
- Stronger foundation for sustainable growth

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION

- What are we building well?
- What do we need to strengthen?
- Who are we not yet reaching?

01

YEAR TWO

Deepen & Expand



MILESTONES

- Increase community engagement
- Diversify funding
- Expand programming

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- Greater community participation and trust
- More diverse and sustainable revenue streams
- Broader, deeper program offerings that meet community needs

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION

- What impact are we seeing?
- What programs are most meaningful?
- Where should we invest more?

02

YEAR THREE

Strengthen & Elevate



MILESTONES

- Evaluate progress
- Strengthen regional collaborations
- Increase statewide visibility

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- Improved effectiveness through evaluation
- Stronger regional relationships and collaborations
- Increased recognition and influence across Connecticut

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION

- What does the data tell us?
- How are we contributing to larger change?
- What needs to evolve?

03

YEAR FOUR

Scale & Sustain



MILESTONES

- Scale successful programs
- Expand organizational capacity

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- Proven programs reaching more people
- Stronger, more resilient organization
- Increased capacity to serve and lead long-term

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION

- What is ready to scale?
- What systems need to grow with us?
- How are we supporting our team and community leaders?

04

YEAR FIVE

Legacy & Renewal



MILESTONES

- Celebrate accomplishments
- Evaluate outcomes
- Prepare the next Strategic Framework

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- A culture of celebration and gratitude
- Clear understanding of impact
- A refreshed vision and strategy for the next five years

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION

- What legacy are we creating?
- What will our next chapter focus on?
- How will we continue to honor our communities?

05

This roadmap is not a straight line— *it's a journey together.*



Community
Centered



Cultural
Rooted



Equity
Driven



Partnership
Powered



Impact
Focused

MANY ROOTS. ONE HERITAGE. OUR FUTURE.



Center Without Walls

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE



Your investment fuels culture. Empowers youth. Heals communities.
And strengthens the future. Together, we create opportunities today
that build thriving, resilient communities for generations to come.

YOUR INVESTMENT. REAL IMPACT.



Stories that reflect us. Theater
that transforms us.



- Produces world premiere plays
- Develops emerging artists
- Builds cultural pride and visibility



CUYO YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Empowering the next
generation to lead
with purpose.



- Leadership development
- Academic support & enrichment
- Cultural identity & self-determination



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE HEALING CIRCLES

Healing through dialogue.
Restoring relationships.
Building community.



- Trains Circle Process Practitioners
- Facilitates healing & accountability
- Strengthens community well-being



TAÍNO LEARNING & CULTURAL RESTORATION

Honoring our first
peoples. Protecting
our heritage.



- Revives Taíno language & traditions
- Educates across generations
- Protects cultural knowledge & sites

Every dollar invested supports programs that uplift youth, preserve culture, promote healing, and build stronger communities.

WAYS TO PARTNER



INDIVIDUAL GIVING

Support youth leadership, arts education,
cultural preservation, and restorative justice.



FOUNDATION PARTNERS

Collaborate to expand programs and
strengthen organizational capacity.



CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Support workforce development,
community engagement, employee
volunteerism, and sponsorship opportunities.



GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

Advance shared priorities in education, arts,
theater, public health, civic engagement,
and economic development.



LEGACY GIVING

Invite supporters to leave a lasting
investment in future generations.



We don't just deliver programs—
we build **power**, protect our **heritage**,
and create **pathways** for future generations.

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

Your generosity fuels opportunity and creates lasting impact.



\$500

**PROVIDES ARTS SUPPLIES
FOR YOUTH WORKSHOPS.**

Equips young artists with the tools
they need to create, express themselves,
and dream big.



\$2,500

**SUPPORTS A COMMUNITY
CULTURAL CELEBRATION.**

Brings people together to honor our
heritage, strengthen community bonds,
and celebrate culture.



\$10,000

**CAN FULLY DEVELOP A
WORLD PREMIERE
OFF-BROADWAY PLAY.**

Invests in new stories, local talent,
and productions that elevate our
voices on larger stages.



\$25,000

**SUPPORTS YOUTH PROGRAMMING
FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS
SATURDAY ACADEMY.**

Provides academic enrichment,
leadership training, cultural education,
and a safe space to grow and lead.



\$50,000+

**STRENGTHENS ORGANIZATIONAL
INFRASTRUCTURE AND LONG-TERM
SUSTAINABILITY.**

Builds the systems, staff, and resources
needed to sustain our mission and
expand our impact for generations.



INVEST TODAY. TRANSFORM TOMORROW.

Your investment is more than support—
it is a commitment to a **thriving future**.

MANY ROOTS. ONE HERITAGE. OUR FUTURE.



OUR COMMITMENT TO ACCOUNTABILITY

ACCOUNTABLE TO OUR COMMUNITY.
COMMITTED TO OUR FUTURE.

At the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center (ACCC), accountability is more than a principle—it's a practice rooted in respect, integrity, and community leadership. We commit to stewarding resources with care, uplifting our communities, and advancing our mission through transparency, equity, and measurable impact. This commitment is guided by our values and our responsibility to present and future generations.



RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP

We manage resources with integrity, efficiency, and a deep sense of responsibility to our community and our mission.



TRANSPARENCY

We operate openly and honestly, sharing information and decisions in ways that build trust and invite accountability.



EQUITY

We center equity in our decision-making, ensuring our programs, policies, and practices uplift Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taíno communities.



COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

We are guided by the voices of our community and invest in leadership from within to drive lasting change.



CONTINUOUS LEARNING

We learn, reflect, and adapt—using what we learn to strengthen our work and better serve our communities.



MEASURING IMPACT

We set clear goals, track our progress, and evaluate our outcomes to ensure our work creates meaningful, lasting impact.



HONORING PARTNERSHIPS

We value relationships built on mutual respect, shared purpose, and collaboration. We honor our partners and the communities we serve.

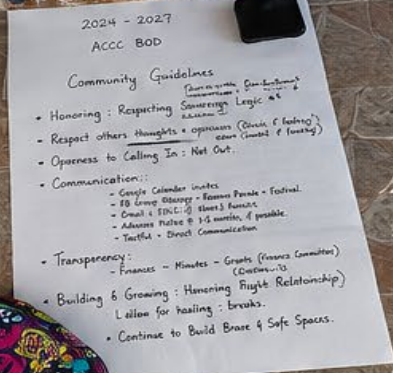


Our Board of Directors and Staff are united in this commitment.

We hold ourselves accountable to our community, our partners, and each other.

Together, we build a culture of accountability that sustains our mission and ensures a thriving, just, and culturally rooted future for all.

MANY ROOTS. ONE HERITAGE. OUR FUTURE.





LOOKING TOWARD 2031

A FUTURE BUILT TOGETHER.

Imagine walking into the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center in 2031.

You feel it immediately: this is a place where culture is lived, leadership is nurtured, healing is practiced, and the future is being built.



A young person who once entered ACCC as a participant is now **leading** a workshop for the next generation. Across the building, an artist is mentoring emerging creators, sharing knowledge that was once passed down to them.



Pa'lante Theater has grown into a thriving creative force, producing powerful stories that center Afro-Caribbean, Black, Taíno, and broader diasporic experiences. **Cuyo Youth Leadership** has cultivated generations of young people who see themselves not simply as participants, but as leaders, organizers, artists, and changemakers.



Restorative Justice Healing Circles have become trusted spaces for reflection, accountability, connection, and collective healing. Community members know that ACCC is a place where difficult conversations can happen with dignity—and where relationships can be repaired and strengthened.



Taíno Learning continues to deepen cultural knowledge and connection, creating pathways for youth and adults to learn from elders, artists, educators, and cultural practitioners. Traditional knowledge is not simply preserved—it is practiced, shared, and carried forward.



Beyond Waterbury, ACCC has developed an expansive network of statewide and regional partners. Schools, cultural institutions, theaters, land trusts, universities, community organizations, municipalities, and funders recognize ACCC as a trusted partner and a leading voice in Afro-Caribbean, Black, and Taíno cultural work.



And behind all of this is a financially resilient institution—one with strong governance, diverse revenue, sustainable programs, committed staff, engaged leadership, and the infrastructure necessary to turn vision into lasting impact.

BY 2031, WE ENVISION:

YOUTH → LEADERS



Young people become mentors, artists, organizers, and community leaders.

ARTISTS → CULTURE BEARERS



Artists pass knowledge forward while creating new work that reflects our communities.

PROGRAMS → PATHWAYS

Cuyo, Pa'lante, Healing Circles, Taíno Learning, and future programs create connected pathways for growth.



PARTNERSHIPS → COLLECTIVE POWER

Local relationships grow into regional and statewide collaborations.



INVESTMENT → SUSTAINABILITY

Philanthropic and community investment strengthens both programs and organizational infrastructure.



CULTURE → COMMUNITY IMPACT

Arts, heritage, healing, education, and leadership become vehicles for a stronger and more connected community.



**THE FUTURE IS NOT
SOMETHING WE WAIT FOR.**

*It Is Something
We Build Together.*



2031 is not the destination.



It is a milestone in a much longer journey—one rooted in our past, guided by our values, and powered by the people who believe in what is possible.



Afro-Caribbean Cultural Center

Culture. Community. Connection. Collective Future.



MANY ROOTS. ONE HERITAGE. OUR FUTURE.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many Hands. One Vision. Our Collective Future.

The creation of this Strategic Framework was a collective effort rooted in our communities. We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed their time, wisdom, and passion to shape our shared path forward.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you for your leadership, dedication, and commitment to our mission, vision, and communities. Your guidance helps ensure ACCC remains strong, accountable, and future-focused.



STAFF

Thank you for your hard work, creativity, and unwavering dedication. You bring our programs to life and inspire our communities every day.



VOLUNTEERS

Thank you for donating your time, talents, and energy. Your support strengthens our events, programs, and the communities we serve.



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Thank you for your vision, insight, and countless hours of thoughtful discussion and planning. Your leadership helped shape the foundation of this framework and will continue to guide our journey forward.



COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

(Seven Angels Theater, Silas Bronson Library, & Rivera Memorial Foundation)

Thank you for your partnership, collaboration, and shared commitment to the cultural, artistic, and educational vitality of our communities. Together, we expand opportunities and deepen our collective impact.



YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for your ideas, honesty, and dreams. Your voices are at the center of our work, and your leadership shapes the future we are building together.



FUNDING PARTNERS

(Leever Foundation and American Savings Foundation)

Thank you for believing in our mission and investing in our communities. Your support helps us grow, innovate, and create lasting change.



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We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your expertise, facilitation, and unwavering support throughout our year-long strategic planning journey. Your guidance helped us listen deeply, think boldly, and dream collectively.



◆◆◆ *Together, we honor our roots and build our future.* ◆◆◆

