

Bluestem Communities Statement of Belonging

We Strive to Foster Compassionate and Welcoming Communities

Residents, participants and staff members bring a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. This strengthens and enriches the woven fabric of our communities. Bluestem Communities has a rich history, is inspired by Mennonite and Church of the Brethren values and is centered on the love of God. We are committed to treating all people with kindness and respect, working toward a more welcoming and compassionate future for our communities and the broader community.

Bluestem Communities, therefore, commits itself to the following tangible actions:

- Listening to, learning from, and advocating for marginalized individuals.
- Asking the difficult, uncomfortable questions of ourselves and one another.
- Engaging in conversations that celebrate the diversity among us.
- Being prepared to address needs for change within our organization.

This can be illustrated in the organization's theme scripture passage of Ephesians 3:16-19:

"I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

Goals of Bluestem Communities Belonging Initiatives

Advisory groups are formed as needed by members from various departments throughout Bluestem Communities. They seek ways to build our culture of belonging through various initiatives. Groups meet with the following goals:

- Be responsive: Offer safe space for staff and residents to share uncomfortable comments or situations and provide follow-up.
- Be pro-active: Create a culture of belonging where overt and micro-aggression is not acceptable.
- Equip employees: Offer a variety of avenues for personal growth of employees on the topic of Belonging.
- Become informed: Provide learning opportunities to inform our goals of being responsive and pro-active.
- Be committed: Examine biases, stereotypes, power imbalance and parties within the organizational culture to ensure that belonging is present at all levels.