



RECLAIM 2019 Strategic Plan Overview

Background

RECLAIM was founded in 2009, and in the first 10 years the organization has provided invaluable therapeutic support for queer and trans youth ages 13 to 25. Many clients, alumni, and their parents have described RECLAIM's therapeutic services as "life-saving." Building on this strong foundation of high-quality services, RECLAIM launched a strategic planning initiative in January of 2019 to kick-off its 10-year anniversary.

While clients have been well served during RECLAIM's initial start-up years, it is critical at this juncture of the organization's development to build a strong infrastructure in which to strengthen leadership, retain staff, bolster existing services and eventually grow the organization. The purpose of the strategic plan is to guide and focus the organization's work over the next three to five years. The board and staff leadership have committed to implementing the plan with fidelity and have a shared understanding of the importance of focusing on the goals outlined.

One of the important attributes of the planning process was the work of the Steering Team. Their purpose was to champion the Strategic Planning initiative and guide the work to help ensure that both the approach and results were based on RECLAIM's actual needs and were a good cultural fit for the organization. Composed of twelve members, the Steering Team had representation from some of RECLAIM's foremost constituent groups: Board and staff, alumni, parents and members of key community organizations.

The strategic planning work began with in-depth data collection to attain a deep understanding of RECLAIM's culture and context. One-on-one interviews were conducted with each Board member and staff leadership member and key community partners; focus groups were held with all other staff members, key community leaders - including a specific Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) group, and RECLAIM alumni. Additionally, input was gleaned from surveys specifically designed for the strategic planning process and from those that were being administered to also gain input for other purposes.

Goals and Strategies

Seven high level goals prioritize the focus of RECLAIM's work over the next three to five years. This is an ambitious number of goals; however, consultation with the Board indicated the desire to delineate specific, individual goals for each segment of essential work. All of the goals and subsequent strategies are tied to the input received during in-depth data collection.

The first three goals focus on internal operations:

- 1. Strengthen Staff Leadership Roles and Responsibilities**

RECLAIM relies on dedicated and talented leadership. To be sustainable over the long-term,



RECLAIM must assure leadership roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and individual leadership team members have necessary support.

2. Strengthen Human Resources Function

In recent years RECLAIM has grown the number of staff who are essential to achieving the organization's mission. Creating policies, compensation plans and a vibrant workplace culture that reflect RECLAIM's values is an important investment to retain and support the valuable employees who work with RECLAIM's clients every day.

3. Achieve Operational Excellence

RECLAIM must develop a sustainable financial model that assures long-term viability. Additionally, it is essential for today as well as the future to build a strong operational infrastructure which addresses financial processes, office and volunteer management and office space requirements.

The fourth and fifth goals focus on RECLAIM's essential external services:

4. Capitalize on Training and Professional Development Expertise

RECLAIM staff have the expertise and experience necessary to provide training in the community. These opportunities also have an important benefit of creating new revenue for the organization to fuel direct services to clients.

5. Fully Support Target Population (queer and trans youth from 13 to 25 years old, with particular focus on youth of color)

Staff will continuously strengthen services provided and as financial resources permit, RECLAIM will add staff to increase authentic connections to youth of color and expand direct services.

RECLAIM's sixth goal addresses the Board of Directors:

6. Strengthen and Grow Board of Directors

RECLAIM will benefit from recruiting additional Board members with specific areas of needed expertise to help implement the strategic plan.

Finally, RECLAIM's seventh goal looks to the future:

7. Explore Opportunities for Future Growth (Resources Permitting)

After financial stability and operational excellence are underway, the organization will be prepared to identify potential new areas of growth and expansion. It is anticipated such growth will likely not occur before 2025.

Conclusion

RECLAIM plays a vitally important role in the LBGTQ+ community. During its early years, RECLAIM's staff have earned the respect of the community for having a high degree of expertise in working with queer and trans youth in particular, and queer and trans people in general. As such, RECLAIM gets many requests to do many different things. Although it is often challenging to say no, it is critical at this stage of development to maintain a laser-like focus on the goals and strategies presented in the strategic plan in order to build a foundation that will help ensure RECLAIM's stability and sustainability in the future. After building a strong foundation, RECLAIM will be well positioned to grow and expand to address further community needs.

