



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commitment to Action

In an effort to carry out this living and breathing mission statement, we are committed to implementing new programs and initiatives, as well as reinforcing existing ones, in all areas of Squash Haven.

In the areas of academic support and enrichment in our classrooms, we are committed to:

- Providing students with the tools they need to achieve the academic success they have envisioned for themselves. Efforts include providing 1:1 tutoring sessions; developing academic plans to help students stay, or get back, on track with their courses; helping students develop self-advocacy skills to leverage resources at school; and, as appropriate, connect with a student's teachers and parents to support their ongoing academic progress
- Selecting academic texts (i.e. books, poems, pieces of art, movies, songs, or newspaper articles) that reflect the diversity of our community and the diversity of our student experiences
- Diversifying the types of activities our students engage in during their academic enrichment sessions. While our primary enrichment focus is to help our students strengthen their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills, we know that there are a myriad of ways in which our students can shine in the classroom. In addition to written exercises and classroom discussions, we also want to provide spaces where our students can demonstrate their artistic, creative, and scientific talents and ways of thinking.

In the areas of college access, persistence, and career development we are committed to:

- Supporting our students with all aspects of their college process, including selecting colleges, developing college essays, completing applications, processing financial aid forms, searching for scholarships, transitioning to college, navigating college, and learning to leverage on-campus resources.
- Working with our students and their families to counteract the cultural, economic, and social barriers that often prevent students from applying to and matriculating to colleges and universities.
- Helping students talk through their post-secondary options. We understand that our students often want more information about options they can pursue after graduation in addition to college. Squash Haven is committed to working with our students and families to 1) explore all options, and 2) encourage students to pursue options that will be the most viable and that will allow them to be happy and live a life of opportunity.
- Beginning with the summer after a student's senior year, work with students to help them find meaningful economic opportunities to 1) help them reduce the costs of going to college, 2) allow

them to build skills that will make them competitive applicants in the job market, 3) help them identify their strengths and fields of interest, and 4) allow them to jumpstart their careers.

- We recognize that many of the challenges our communities face are rooted in the economic barriers that have often perpetuated cycles of poverty. Our commitment in this area of our work comes from this awareness, and we will continue to work closely with our students so that they have access to viable economic opportunities that allow them and their families to achieve economic prosperity.
- Provide ongoing support in the area of mental health for college students, recognizing that many of them struggle with the emotional and social transition.

In the areas of squash, wellness, and overall physical well-being, we are committed to:

- Creating spaces where students can have conversations about our students' experiences in the squash world. While we are committed to preparing students to navigate spaces, it is our hope that we can also work with our partners and peer institutions so that they are having similar conversations with their constituents. After all, the burden of this work, or of entering these spaces, should not rest solely on our students.
- Promoting a comprehensive approach to wellness in all regards: physical, mental, and emotional. To that end, we will continue to implement our ASSET training at every enrichment session, and will make concerted efforts to ask our students about what types of support they need. When appropriate, we will help students connect with local resources that are better equipped to help them navigate any social and emotional challenges they face.
- While squash is the driving vehicle of our fitness program, we also recognize that students have many talents and that there are different areas in which they can thrive athletically. We will work to create meaningful opportunities for our students to showcase the different talents they have, especially during our 5-week summer program.

In the area of community engagement, we are committed to:

- Engaging the New Haven community in genuine ways. As part of our community engagement efforts, such as volunteering, we will work with our students to learn more about the constituencies they are engaging with.
- Connecting our students with guest speakers, local organizations, and other groups in the community where they can listen and learn more about the different voices and stories of our city.
- Providing our students with different field trip opportunities that allow them to see their learning "come to life" in different ways outside of the classroom. This might include museum visits, movie showings, neighborhood walks, or additional volunteer projects.

In the area of family engagement, we are committed to:

- Incorporating the voices of the families of our program by soliciting their input about all aspects of their children's experiences.

- Connecting families to economic, educational, food, and health resources in the community so as to ensure their overall prosperity and well-being.
- Working closely with families to ensure that, to the greatest extent, the Squash Haven experience they have envisioned for their children aligns with programmatic experiences.

In the area of board engagement, we are committed to:

- Ensuring all new board members have a demonstrated interest in diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Working for more diversity and inclusion on the board, with continued priority on young adult members, New Haven residents, and BIPOC members, first generation college graduates, and board members who otherwise reflect the background and experiences of Squash Haven's students
- Committing that the board and its members will do the work required to understand more fully and deeply the New Haven community where our students live
- Engaging in conversations about narratives or language that aggregate, stereotype, or otherwise disempower program participants as well as in conversations about systemic inequalities and racism affecting our students
- Working to have students and families attending Squash events feel included rather than observed
- Encouraging board members to explore cultural opportunities that represent our Squash Haven diversity.

In the area of fundraising, we are committed to:

- Crafting materials that celebrate our students and lift up their experiences, voices, perspectives, diversity, and lived experiences
- Soliciting DEI input on fundraising and communications materials
- Requesting permission from students to use their quotes, images, and to otherwise refer to them
- Building events that reflect our DEI values, celebrate our students and include - without tokenizing - student voices and experiences
- Working to have students and families attending Squash events feel included rather than observed
- Prioritizing and centering student and program needs that drive fundraising rather than fundraising driving program and student development

In the area of staff, we are committed to:

- Creating hiring practices that are inclusive and welcoming for diverse applicants, including but not limited to job descriptions, mechanisms for recruitment, and interviewing practices
- Ensuring all new staff members have a demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Prioritizing hiring for more diversity and inclusion, and in particular with respect to New Haven residents, BIPOC members, first generation college graduates, and staff who otherwise reflect the background and experiences of Squash Haven's students

- Actively promoting a culture of continued learning in areas of DEI by supporting internal and external professional development and professional development more broadly
- Incorporating DEI principles in staff evaluation
- Creating spaces for staff voices to be heard and ensure those voices are respected and valued
- Ensuring that all staff are given opportunities to participate and contribute to the overall growth of the organization; Develop a staff structure that empowers staff to be part of the decision making process throughout Squash Haven
- Ensuring that there are equal opportunities in the workplace and that every staff member is given equal opportunity to succeed. Staff will be compensated fairly for their work
- Striving to provide comprehensive support that ensures a staff's mental health and overall well-being

In the area of alumni engagement, we are committed to:

- Incorporating the voices of the Squash Haven alumni by soliciting their input about all aspects of their Squash Haven experiences