



BLACK TRANS FUND

2020 DOCKET



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Black Trans Fund, an incubated Groundswell Fund project, is proud to announce over \$200,000 in grants and fiscal sponsorship fees to ten Black trans-led organizations in its inaugural round of grantmaking. Black Trans Fund Advisors, seven prominent Black trans-leaders from various social justice movements, recommended over 30 groups for funding. BTF grantees represent some of the most effective and powerful organizations centered in Black trans joy and liberation. All grantees are led by Black transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary people, have budgets under \$1 million and represent both the vanguard and future of Black trans-led movement building.

DEEP APPRECIATION TO ALL GROUNDSWELL FUND STAFF FOR THEIR SUPPORT. SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Vanessa Daniel

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Angella Bellota

Naa Hammond

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Hunter Dae Little-Goodridge

Omaria Sanchez Pratt

Special thank you to our foundation partners Black Led Movement Fund at Borealis Philanthropy, NoVo Foundation, and Black Trans Fund Ambassadors Tynesha McHarris and Julia Beatty.

WELCOME

Join me in celebrating the first docket for Black trans communities curated by Black trans leaders. It is an honor to share the work of these ten Black trans-led organizations supporting Black trans communities to thrive and find joy in a world that is both anti-Black and transphobic. BTF is a labor of love, to Black trans communities who have sharpened and shaped this liberatory fund's vision.

Uprising and action make 2020 a historical year. Black trans people have been leading the fight for liberation for decades, even when those fights have not centered or valued our trans identities. Despite an uptick in visibility, Black transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary people still face shocking rates of mortality and homelessness; conditions have gotten worse as a result of the floundering U.S. economy and the Coronavirus pandemic. Yet our inaugural grantees are visioning a way forward by:

- > **Uplifting cooperative economic and housing models for sex workers;**
- > **Providing wrap-around programs that link voter engagement with direct and survival services;**
- > **Pioneering trans health models in the South; and**
- > **Utilizing arts, culture, and spirituality to amplify Black trans voices and build power.**

While there has been an increase in donor attention to Black-led work, it has yet to translate into significant gains in giving to Black Trans-led work, and even fewer Black trans people are directing the flow of resources.

Black Trans Fund is a groundbreaking endeavor: the first national fund in the country dedicated to uplifting, resourcing, and building the capacity of Black trans social justice leaders. Built on the legacy of so many Black trans freedom fighters and led by and for Black trans people who come out of movement organizing, we embody self-determination in resourcing our community.

The ten groups featured in this docket embody Black trans joy's true breadth and honor the brilliance and resilience of Black trans leadership to improve the material conditions of Black trans lives.



**Love and Liberation,
Bré Anne Rivera**

PROGRAM OFFICER, BLACK TRANS FUND

MEET BLACK TRANS FUND ADVISORS



Bré Anne Rivera
GROUNDSWELL FUND

Bré (she/her) lives her life boldly and unapologetically and has over 15 years of experience resourcing Black trans communities. Before her role in the philanthropic sector, Bré worked as a research assistant at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, and as an HIV intervention specialist at Wayne State University's School of Medicine. Bré currently serves on the boards of Positive Women's Network-USA, Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico, Third Wave Fund, and Grantmakers of Girls of Color.



Eli Dru
BLACK TRANS MEDIA, BLACK TRANS TRAVEL FUND, TRANSGENDER GENDER-VARIANT AND INTERSEX JUSTICE PROJECT (TGIJP)

Eli is a community organizer from the Bronx working with Black trans-led initiatives internationally, committed to engaging in political and popular education. Eli is dedicated to aiding engagement in social conversation around the fight to abolish the prison industrial complex beyond the binary. He engages in creating spaces for Black trans men and masculine people to explore masculinity and manhood using a Black feminist and womanist framework. They enjoy helping Black intersex, gender variant, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming people get their material needs met through crowdfunding and networking for non-monetary support. Committed to the study of radical Black tradition, they hope to continue to learn with community, and to strategize and practice tangible ways to contribute to radically restructuring our communities to exist without police and prisons/jails/detention centers.



Xavier Maatra
DAB OF CONSULTING, CHI CITY FOODS LLC

Xavier Maatra (he/they) is a queer trans masculine non-profit consultant, community educator, activist, and urban farmer from southern New Jersey currently thriving in Chicago. For over 15 years, he has traveled the country as a labor organizer, social justice workshop facilitator, and youth advocate.



Monica Jones
THE OUTLAW PROJECT

Ms. Jones is the founder and CEO of The Outlaw Project, an organization based on intersectionality principles to prioritize the leadership of people of color, transgender women, gender non-binary people, and migrants for sex worker rights.

She is a highly sought-after speaker who has presented on transgender rights, HIV/AIDS, feminism, sex work, and social work. She has given presentations to the Commission on the Status of Women in NY, the Universal Periodic Review in Geneva, International AIDS Conferences in Melbourne, Australia and Durban, South Africa, and the Association of Women in Development in Brazil. Ms. Jones is the recipient of the SPARK! Authentic Life Award and was honored as one of the Trans 100 in 2015. Monica received the Diversity Advisory Committee of Phoenix College Award in 2012. She also brought international attention to the racial profiling of black transwomen after an arrest under Arizona's discriminatory "manifesting prostitution" law, which she fought and won.

She has presented at universities across the United States, introducing students of all levels to critical issues relating to transgender experience, rights, sex worker rights, workers rights, gender justice, the law & social work.



J Mase III
BLACK TRANS PRAYER BOOK

J Mase III is a Black/Trans/queer poet and educator based in Seattle by way of Philadelphia. As an educator, Mase has worked with community members in the U.S., U.K., and Canada on the needs of LGBTQIA+ folks and racial justice in spaces such as K-12 schools, universities, faith communities and restricted care facilities. He is founder of awQward, the first trans and queer people of color talent agency. J Mase is author of *And Then I Got Fired: One Transqueer's Reflections on Grief, Unemployment & Inappropriate Jokes About Death* as well as *White Folks Be Trippin': An Ethnography Through Poetry & Prose*. Currently, he is head writer for the theatrical production *Black Bois* and is co-editor of the *Black Trans Prayer Book*.



Jai Celestial Shavers

SOFT BOI CONSULTING, BLACK YOUTH PROJECT 100, SOUTHERN ORGANIZERS ACADEMY

Jai Celestial Shavers (he/his) is a Black Queer Feminist, Abolitionist, and Southern Boi with a passion for hitting his lil jig, cooking meals for his family, and keeping your elder's favorite quotes alive and in rotation.

Born and raised in Baton Rouge and politicized in New Orleans, Jai has over ten years of training and facilitation experience. He's been active in organizing campaigns to end criminalization, policing, deportation and confinement since 2013. Jai helps foster leadership of young trans and queer Blaq folx through his work with Soft Boi Consulting.



Joshua Allen

BLACK EXCELLENCE COLLECTIVE

Joshua Allen (they/them) is a non-binary artist and activist from Brooklyn, NY, and founding organizer of the Black Excellence Collective. Currently, they are serving as a member of Resist Foundation's 2020 funding group, a summer faculty member at Sadie Nash Leadership Project, and working on their debut collection of prose and poetry titled *All The Things I Never Said*.



Aaryn Lang

IGABI CONSULTING

Aaryn Lang (she/her/hers) is a Black, Ohio-born consultant, writer, public speaker, and media personality. Miss Lang's primary focus is championing the social, economic, and political wellbeing of the Transgender community, specifically the needs of Black Transgender women. Currently, Miss Lang is developing IGABI Consulting, a consulting practice where she will guide individuals and organizations in moving toward a more just world for Black Transgender people. She aims to use her skills as an organizer, facilitator, and content creator to advise philanthropic entities on how to best shift resources to the Black Trans community.

BLACK TRANS FUND

GRANTMAKING

Informed by careful national field analysis of the landscape of Black trans movement work, Black Trans Fund's grantmaking challenges long-standing barriers that Black trans people have faced in obtaining funding, such as discriminatory due diligence and vetting practices that leave many Black trans-led groups out of funding opportunities.

The BTF seeks to change culture through its grantmaking, capacity building and philanthropic organizing by shifting the narrative about Black trans communities towards more joy and resilience, and away from violence and despair.

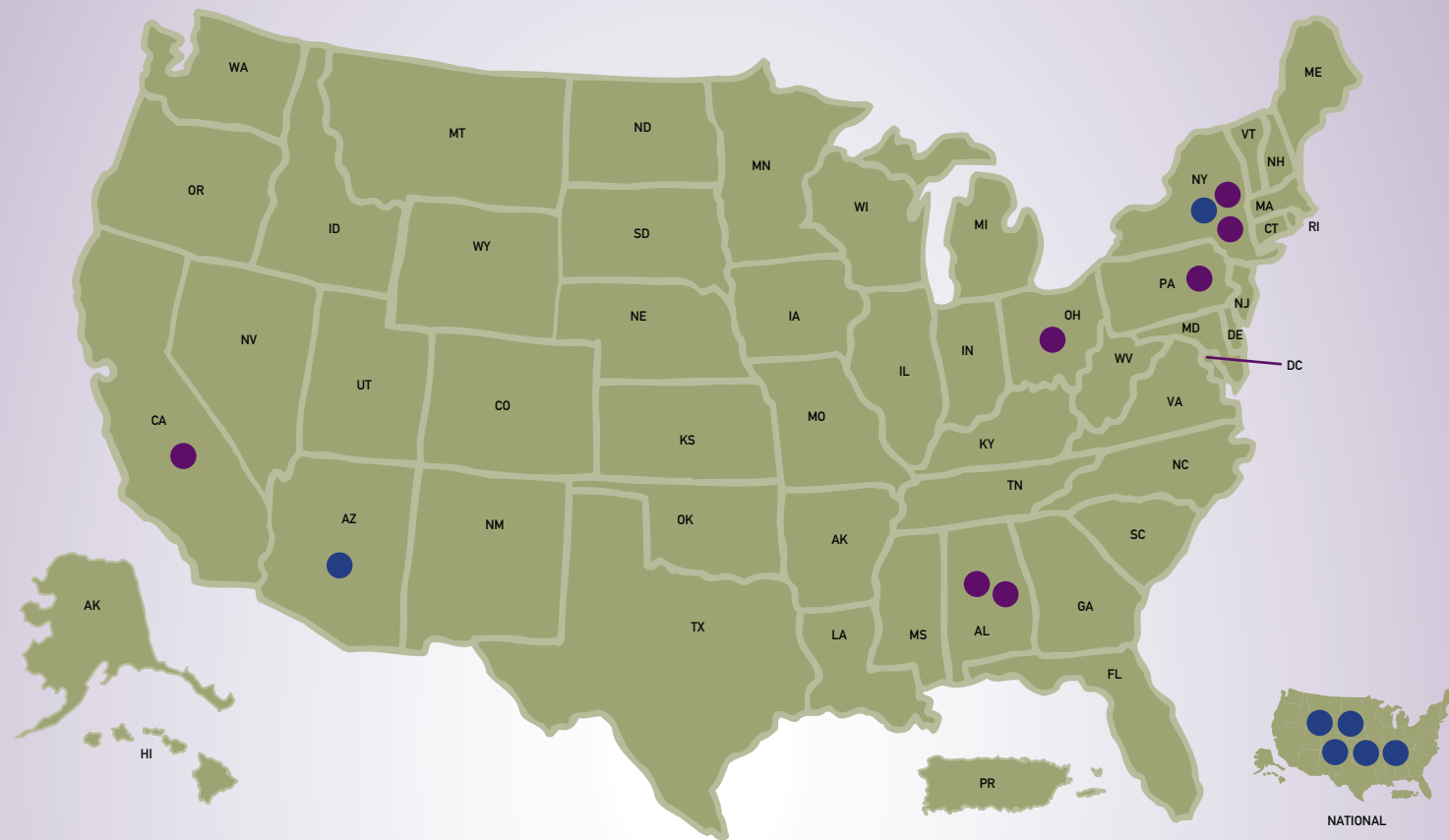
PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZING

BTF organizes within foundation spaces to unlock more resources for Black trans-led work and by training and building the capacity of Black trans people to increase the visibility of Black trans grantmakers in the philanthropic sector. BTF provides field analysis and power mapping to the broader movement that gives a clear, accurate picture of the breadth of Black trans work across the country. We educate funders about how Black trans organizations lead work beyond antiviolence and discrimination, where philanthropy has tended to silo Black trans work.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Black Trans Fund builds capacity with grantees by using data collected during our field analysis to develop capacity building infrastructures to support Black trans power-building, strengthen their collective organizing muscle, and advance liberatory practices for Black trans lives. We build the grantmaking muscles of BTF advisors by conducting grantmaking trainings rooted in cultural competency cultivated by deep relationships within Black trans communities.

2020 BLACK TRANS FUND GRANTEES



- Local or state grantees
- Groups that provided mutual aid support to Black trans communities nationally

ALABAMA

Knights & Orchid Society
Transgender Advocates, Knowledgeable, Empowering (TAKE) Resource List

ARIZONA

The Outlaw Project

CALIFORNIA

The Transgender District

OHIO

Black, Queer & Intersectional Columbus

PENNSYLVANIA

SisTers PGH

NEW YORK

Black Trans Media
Black Trans Femmes in the Arts
For the Gworlds

NATIONAL

Black Trans Femmes in the Arts
Black Trans Media
The Black Trans Prayer Book
SisTers PGH
Transgender Advocates, Knowledgeable, Empowering (TAKE) Resource Center



Black Queer & Intersectional Collective

2020 BLACK TRANS FUND GRANTEES

Black Queer & Intersectional Collective (BQIC)

COLUMBUS, OH

Black Queer & Intersectional Collective (BQIC) is a grassroots community organization in central Ohio that advances liberation of Black queer, trans, and intersex people from all walks of life through direct action, community organizing, issue education, and the creation of spaces that uplift community voice. In June of 2017, a demonstration planned by a coalition of Black queer and trans people in Columbus, Ohio made national headlines after organizers were arrested. The organizers sought to raise awareness of the violence and erasure of Black and Brown queer and Trans people, in particular the lack of space for Black and Brown people at the Stonewall Columbus Pride Festival and Parade, an annual pride celebration in Columbus. Not long after, BQIC launched the “Free Black Pride 4” campaign that successfully fought to

get charges against the members dropped. As an act of cultural resistance, BQIC created and now hosts an annual free Black Pride Celebration in honor of the “Free Black Pride 4” that centers and celebrates Black queer and trans liberation. In 2018, BQIC began deepening their organizing work and created a set of Systemic Demands that guides its radical vision for liberation. In June of 2020, BQIC released #12ToAbolish12, a platform for abolishing the Columbus Division of Police and making the city a more liberated place, especially for Black LGBTQ+ people. In response to the pandemic, BQIC implemented a mutual aid program that provides recipients with up to \$1,000 per person per year to provide Black queer and trans people with financial resources to help community sustain themselves. These funds are crucial to the survival of Black trans communities in Columbus, considering Ohio is one of the most hostile states in the country for trans and queer communities of color.



Black Trans Femmes in the Arts



Black Trans Media

Black Trans Femmes in the Arts (BTFA)

NEW YORK, NY + NATIONAL

BTFA connects the community of Black trans women and non-binary femmes in the arts to build community power among Black trans women and non-binary femmes. BTFA creates social change, making conditions better for Black trans communities by centering the art of Black trans femmes and creating an outlet for members to shape the future of their dreams. Founded on the principle that Black trans femmes are human beings who deserve access to the things they enjoy, BTFA supports Black trans femmes in living the life of their dreams, while learning about how art is vital to liberation. BTFA host a weekly performance space for artists to share their gifts and talents while get paid for their craft. Leading with love and protection of Black trans femmes, BTFA also created a bail fund and provides mutual aid for Black trans femmes nationwide in response to the protest and uprising for Black Lives.

Black Trans Media

NEW YORK, NY

Black Trans Media is committed to building the power of Black trans people and trans communities of color. It works at the intersections of racial and gender justice, confronting racism and transphobia in institutions and everyday life. Black Trans Media shifts and reframes the value and worth of Black trans people by creating and supporting media that amplifies the Black trans experience, organizing community-based events around issues of injustice and liberation and centering Black trans folks in its work and its leadership. Its projects and collaborations connect Black trans people, the broader public, and sustainable opportunities to build, showcase, heal, and celebrate Black trans lives. Black Trans Media shifts transphobia by uplifting Black trans people, transforms conditions by telling stories, and using those stories to build power and organize, creating a cultural organizing space for Black trans people. Black Trans Media creates social change, making conditions

better for Black trans communities by honoring the legacy of Black trans leaders, past and present, and centering Black trans people. A grassroots organization, Black Trans Media seeks to invest in the community to ensure that the Black trans community is seen on its own terms, is supported, and has access to the funds needed to maintain housing. ntry for trans and queer communities of color.

For the Gworls

NEW YORK, NY + NATIONAL

Founded in 2019, For the Gworls improves conditions for Black trans communities by providing low barrier mutual aid support to Black trans women and femmes. For the Gworls began as a party collective that hosted rent parties to assist Black trans women and femmes with rental payments. Parties are attended by 200-300 people, recruited by word of mouth and social media. In 2020, For the Gworls evolved from a collective hosting rent parties into a full-service organization that can meet the community's growing needs

during the Coronavirus pandemic. Mutual aid offerings provided by For the Gworls include payments for rent, gender-affirming care, and surgery micro-grants. Applications are accepted from Black trans women and femme's internationally, reducing the homelessness rates in the Black transgender community internationally while reducing the numbers of affirmative surgeries performed in high-risk ways, due to lack of insurance coverage and limited numbers of providers that perform gender affirming procedures. Now more than ever, this work is important because Black transgender people are losing their jobs in disproportionately high numbers, which only exacerbates already terrible conditions.

SisTers PGH

PITTSBURGH, PA

SisTers PGH is a Black trans-led community center that provides person first supportive services, emergency shelter, and housing for transgender and non-binary communities in Pittsburgh seeking respite from homelessness



SisTers PGH



Transgender District

and needing supportive services. SisTers PGH makes conditions better for Black trans communities by supporting grassroots organizers who are on the ground protesting and providing education and support to members fighting for collective liberation with Black trans people in leadership. Founded in 2013 as a resource provider, SisTers PGH has evolved into a political education hub for Black trans communities, teaching members to review and draft legislation; leading actions demanding better conditions for transgender and non-binary people incarcerated in the Allegheny County Jail; and protesting fracking in communities of color. In 2020, with support from Groundswell's Rapid Response Fund in collaboration with Black Trans Fund, SisTers PGH created a mutual aid fund to provide therapy and essential recovery services to Black transgender and non-binary people in Pittsburgh during COVID-19.

Transgender Advocates Knowledgeable Empowering (TAKE) Resource Center

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

Transgender Advocates Knowledgeable Empowering (TAKE) Resource Center works to empower trans women of color by meeting needs and increasing accessibility. TAKE improves conditions for Black trans communities by empowering members to create space to heal and love each other while creating low-barrier programming and services tailored to the trans communities of Birmingham, Alabama. Peer advocates participate trainings on workplace discrimination, "know your rights", and civic engagement trainings to increase member awareness of political issues most impact trans Alabamians. TAKE Resource Center provides peer-driven leadership programming, support groups and team building retreats to develop the next generation of trans leaders in the fight for trans liberation. TAKE Resource Center transitional housing program, Gloria's House has expanded service

to provide housing to fourteen trans femmes, trans masculine and non-binary trans people struggling with housing insecurity due to the discriminatory housing practices enforced by the U.S. Department of Housing.

The Black Trans Prayer Book

NATIONAL

The Black Trans Prayer Book is an interfaith, multi-dimensional, artistic, and theological work that collects the stories, poems, prayers, meditation, spells, and incantations of Black trans and non-binary people. Often pushed out of faith spaces, and yet still deeply connected to the historical legacy of spirituality in the Black community, Black trans people face unprecedented spiritual, physical, and psychological violence. *The Black Trans Prayer Book* is a tool of healing and affirmation centered on uplifting Black trans and non-binary people and an expression of the diverse faiths and spiritual practices of Black trans communities. *The Black Trans Prayer Book* creates social change, making conditions better for Black trans communities

by addressing religious-based violence, giving participants and readers a space to heal from religious anti-queer and anti-trans rhetoric; be honest about the trauma they experience, and demand accountability from religious institutions. Looking towards the future, *The Black Trans Prayer Book* will release a documentary film highlighting stories of Black trans faith leaders as they navigate complex relationships of faith and trans identities, while providing contributing writers with technologies and equipment necessary to continue to share their faith journeys.

The Knights & Orchids Society (TKO)

ALABAMA

Founded in 2012, The Knights & Orchids Society (TKO) builds the African American TLGB community's power throughout rural Alabama and across the South to win its dream of justice and equality through voter engagement and a wraparound support approach that includes collective economics, education, leadership, organizing, and

cultural work. TKO supports trans and queer people of color (TQPOC), prioritizing HIV prevention and interventions to address the social determinants of health that are propelling the poor health outcomes of Black trans people in the South providing direct health and wellness services to its members. In 2020, TKO organized its members and collaborated with the Yellowhammer Fund to stop a bill restricting transitional care for TGNC (Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming) youth. The Alabama Senate voted overwhelming in favor of the Vulnerable Child Compassion and Protection Act, which would make it a Class C felony for any doctor or health care provider who prescribes medications intended to delay the onset of puberty or preform gender-affirming procedures on transgender minors. TKO took this defeat as an opportunity to expand healthcare programming to help families navigating healthcare for trans youth while also addressing lack of transportation, the closest TGNC friendly provider is 150 miles away from Selma AL, TKO offers mutual aid support, financial planning, documentation changes, reproductive justice resources and a virtual network of providers for Black trans communities in Alabama. In response the pandemic, TKO moved over 1,000 pounds of fresh produce to Black communities in Selma. TKO takes part in getting out the vote and voter engagement efforts to ensure that members have the information needed to make informed decisions at the ballot box.

The Outlaw Project

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Based on the principles of intersectionality, the Outlaw Project prioritizes the leadership of people of color, transgender women, gender non-binary, and migrant people to advance sex worker rights. The Outlaw Project creates social change, improving conditions for

Black trans communities by working to end “manifestation laws” that disproportionately result in the arrests of Black trans women accused of sex work. Led by Monica Jones, a Black trans social worker and international advocate for sex worker rights, The Outlaw Project believes that ensuring legal rights and health is a first step toward ensuring the wellbeing and safety of all sex workers. The Outlaw Project collaborated with Groundswell Fund grantee Trans Queer Pueblo and the ALCU and brought a lawsuit against the city of Phoenix to make changes Municipal Code e -that currently criminalizes waving at cars, talking to passersby, and asking if someone is a police officer. The code disproportionately affects Black, Brown, and migrant trans women. During the Coronavirus pandemic, sex workers from surrounding states traveled to Arizona, where they could work more freely, due to lack restrictions on social distancing. Support from a recent Groundswell’s Rapid Response Fund grant, in collaboration with Black Trans Fund, allowed The Outlaw Project to provide emergency relief funding, gift cards for gas, and hotel vouchers to Black trans women traveling through Phoenix seeking work during the Coronavirus pandemic. The Outlaw Project’s leadership team has had difficulty finding housing for trans women during the pandemic due to transphobia and anti-sex worker policies at hotels. The Outlaw Project is now developing a tiny homes program that would create safe and affordable housing for Black and Brown trans women living in the greater Phoenix area.

The Transgender District

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

San Francisco’s Tenderloin neighborhood has long been the heart of the Bay Area’s LGBTQ+ community; the 1966 uprising at the Compton Cafeteria, located in the heart of the Tenderloin, is the first documented uprising of



Black Trans Media at Queer Liberation March for Black Lives

transgender and queer people in the U.S. In 2017, three Black trans women lead the effort to rename the area “Compton’s Transgender Cultural District” and created this organization to cultivate an urban environment that fosters the rich history, culture, legacy, and empowerment of transgender people and its deep roots in the neighborhood. The Transgender District aims to stabilize and economically empower the transgender community through ownership of homes and businesses, and the creation of historical and cultural sites and safe community spaces. TD’s programs include tenant protection, economic justice, and workforce development (including employment training and counseling programs), arts and culture, cultural heritage protection, and land use,

zoning, and beautification. As is true around the nation, San Francisco’s Black trans community has been disproportionately hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, as its member’s experience job loss, housing insecurity, health risks, and increased violence. The Transgender District received a recent Rapid Response Fund grant, in collaboration with Black Trans Fund, to strengthen mutual aid and housing assistance to Black trans people living in the Tenderloin. The Transgender District creates social change, making conditions better for Black trans communities by obtaining legal recognition for the District, which will be a win for the community living in and around the Tenderloin. The District is creating real community security by hiring and housing its own.

To learn more about Black Trans Fund, please contact Program Officer Bré Anne Rivera at brivera@groundswellfund.org

COVER PHOTO: The Black Trans Prayer Book



GROUNDSWELL FUND

Groundswell Fund strengthens U.S. movements for reproductive and social justice by resourcing intersectional grassroots organizing and centering the leadership of women of color—particularly those who are Black, Indigenous, and transgender.

www.groundswellfund.org