

# Kids Forward honors program for organizations working to advance racial justice

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## Kids Forward to Honor Organizations Working to Advance Racial Justice and Amplify the Voices of Communities of Color

*Black Leaders Organizing for Communities, Native Vote, and Voces de la Frontera to Receive Giraffe Award*

MADISON, WI – Kids Forward will honor Black Leaders Organizing for Communities (BLOC), the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute's Native Vote program, and Voces de la Frontera for their work to amplify the voices of communities of color and engage African-American, Native American, and Latinx communities in advocating **for policies that will make Wisconsin a more equitable state.**

The three organizations will be honored with a Kids Forward "Giraffe Award" at the organization's annual event, Step Forward for Kids, scheduled for Thursday, September 27 in Madison. Giraffe Awards are given to individuals or organizations who have courageously advocated and worked to build the best future possible for

every kid, every family, and every community in Wisconsin. In essence, they have “stuck their neck out for kids, families, and communities.”

Kids Forward selected this year’s Giraffe Award recipients to highlight the importance of the upcoming elections and to honor those who have been working on the ground to bring about systemic change and make elections more just, fair, and inclusive.

“With Election Day quickly approaching, Kids Forward felt there was no better time to highlight and honor our three award winners,” said Ken Taylor, ED/CEO of Kids Forward. “Our electoral process has left out and dismissed the voices of people of color for far too long and that needs to change. Communities of color need to be listened to, and candidates need to start talking about race and ethnicity and how they’re going to address the disparities that exist in Wisconsin. Thankfully, that change is being led by Black Leaders Organizing for Change, Native Vote, Voces de la Frontera, and the communities they represent. It’s long overdue that the voices of people are heard and respected—not only during election season but in all conversations related to public policy.”

Kids Forward recently launched [Race to the Polls](#), a campaign to make racial justice a priority during the election cycle and beyond, but long before the campaign, organizations like the Giraffe Award honorees have been talking about racial justice and working on the ground to bring about systemic change.

### **2018 Giraffe Award Recipients:**

**Black Leaders Organizing for Change (BLOC)** is a nonprofit organization working to ensure a high quality of life for members of the Black community in Milwaukee and throughout Wisconsin. The organization puts the concerns and the needs of the communities they represent first and uses community-based organizing and face-to-face conversations to drive change. They are uniters, working to lift up Black citizens, leaders, and businesses in their community.

**Native Vote** was created by the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute with leadership from **Matt Dannenberg**, a Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa citizen and Program Director for the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters. The goal of the project is to engage with Wisconsin’s Native communities and work to combat historic voter disenfranchisement and contemporary barriers to voting facing Wisconsin’s Native communities.

**Voces de la Frontera is a membership-based community organization** led by low-wage workers, immigrants, and youth whose mission is to protect and expand civil rights and workers' rights through leadership development, community organizing and empowerment. **Voces strives to create a world where all people live free of poverty and discrimination,** have access to safe, dignified work, quality education, and health care; where immigrants can cross borders with dignity; and human rights and workers' rights are respected; where government is truly "of the people," and all families thrive.

The Giraffe Awards will be presented at the organization's annual fundraising event, **Step Forward for Kids on the evening of Thursday, September 27, 2018 at the Boardman & Clark in Madison.** Tickets and sponsorships can be purchased online at [www.kidsforward.net](http://www.kidsforward.net).