



## VLI Launches Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Scholarship Fund

**June 4, 2020** – The Vermont Leadership Institute (VLI) at the Snelling Center for Government has announced the creation of a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Scholarship Fund for individuals from underrepresented and marginalized groups. The fund aims to help remove financial barriers to participation in VLI’s leadership program.

“We recognize that current racial tensions have been created and compounded by a long history of systemic exclusion and oppression,” said VLI Director Jody Fried. “Equal opportunity requires equity, and the Vermont Leadership Institute is committed to making deliberate efforts to reach the traditionally underserved, ignored, and systemically disenfranchised members of our Vermont communities. We must have diverse voices at the table if we are going to create the intimate dialogue, long-lasting trust and deep understanding required to make complex systemic change.”

Strong and innovative leadership has never been more important for Vermont’s health and prosperity. Racial injustice, further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic, affects every aspect of community life, reaching all sectors of Vermont. The Snelling Center for Government recognizes a need for complex systems change, and is prepared to offer the necessary support and resources for a new class of visionary leaders through its premier civic leadership development program, the Vermont Leadership Institute. Applications for the Vermont Leadership Institute Class of 2021 are currently being accepted through July 1, 2020.

The Vermont Leadership Institute (VLI) has been offering intensive programs for leaders in Vermont’s most active private, public and non-profit sectors since 1995. The VLI Class of 2021 will begin its journey in September by delving into topics such as personal leadership adaptation; complex systems thinking and innovation; and leadership paradigms that actively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion for all Vermonters. In addition, participants will build meaningful networks and relationships, joining a community of more than 570 VLI graduates who are making a difference in Vermont: leading innovative businesses, creating award-winning non-profits, serving in the legislature and state government, and volunteering in their communities.

To learn more about the Vermont Leadership Institute, including the program schedule and application process, please visit [www.snellingcenter.org](http://www.snellingcenter.org) or contact Jody Fried, VLI Director, at [jody@snellingcenter.org](mailto:jody@snellingcenter.org) or 802.274.4774.

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**The Snelling Center for Government is a non-partisan, non-profit organization committed to fostering responsible and ethical civic leadership, encouraging public service by private citizens, and promoting informed citizen participation in shaping public policy in Vermont. For more information, please visit our website at [www.snellingcenter.org](http://www.snellingcenter.org).**