



**Op-Ed: Rethinking diversity, equity and inclusion:**  
*A journey to realization and transformation*

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We've always known that our community is our highest priority. With untiring hearts and commitment, we have served nearly one million people in the greater New Orleans area over the past 125 years. Throughout our history, we have witnessed institutional, structural and systemic failures that continue to present roadblocks to success for our families, our city, and our country, and we believe it is our responsibility to expose these societal inequities to provoke crucial change.

Despite this strong legacy of fighting for equality and fairness, there are things about our own past that remain blind spots for us. Just four years ago, for example, we realized that many of the pictures on the walls of our main campus lobby displayed decades of our own white-only serving history. Removing those remnants of forced racial segregation and replacing them with photos representing the vibrancy and diversity of the people we serve was truly transformative for our organization. It was also an important step toward acknowledging that there is still much work to be done.

So, when we recently learned about the racist and repugnant views of our namesake, Charles Kingsley, we immediately knew we had to take decisive action. In our steadfast commitment to the people we serve and our many community stakeholders and supporters, we openly and transparently shared what we had discovered and reaffirmed our determination to continue to evolve as an anti-racist agency and champion for social justice, fairness, and equity.

Over the past 18 months, it was this spirit that guided us on a highly inclusive journey of identifying a new name for our historic organization. A name that speaks to resiliency and determination of those we serve and our community to succeed and thrive, no matter how adverse the societal and environmental obstacles in their way. A new name that is reflective of the high-quality, hands-on, innovative staff that genuinely cares for the community it serves, continues to adapt to the ever evolving needs of the community, and enthusiastically provides an immense array of holistic services for the entire family. Which is precisely how we arrived at our new name – CLOVER!

Much like the people of New Orleans and Southeast Louisiana, a clover is determined to grow and thrive in some of the most unfavorable conditions possible. The Clover also honors our historic roots in the Irish Channel and portrays symbols of renewal, hope, peace and prosperity

to inspire systemic change and growth. And, right in the middle of Clover is the word “love.” Throughout this journey of change and transformation, we received input from hundreds of our participants, alums, staff, board members, partners and supporters. What we heard over and over again was how much people throughout our community LOVE this place, the bold stands we have taken against prejudice, racism and inequity, and the life transforming work we have done, and continue to do to help positively change the trajectory for ALL people in our city and region.

We are CLOVER! We are proud of our legacy of service to our community and will continue to wholeheartedly work toward our vision of a city and region where all young children are ready to succeed and all citizens are healthy and economically stable. A place where all people can, not just survive, but truly thrive!

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*Clover was established in 1896 as the first settlement house in the South. Clover’s mission is to educate children, strengthen families, and build community. During its 125th anniversary year in 2022, the organization retired the Kingsley House name due to the racist viewpoints of its former namesake, Charles Kingsley.*

*Clover envisions a city and region where all young children are ready to succeed, and all citizens are healthy and economically stable. Recognizing that vulnerable families are at risk of being caught in an intractable cycle of poverty, we are committed to ensuring that individuals and families have the support necessary to be successful at all stages of life. To accomplish our goals, we join forces with dedicated community partners and collectively work with families to fuel economic growth and social change in our city, state, and region.*