



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025

**Black Administrators in Child Welfare of Illinois**



Black Administrators in Child Welfare of Illinois

Established January 28, 2014



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***“ A Strong VOICE”***

***“ A Powerful FORCE”***

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### **MISSION**

The Black Administrators in Child Welfare of Illinois (BACW-I) is dedicated to the development of African American leaders for the purpose of empowering and protecting the rights of children and families.

### **VISION**

The Black Administrators in Child Welfare of Illinois (BACW-I) is committed to working in collaboration with state and local human service agencies to reduce disproportionality and address disparate treatment by strengthening the development of families of color. Our intent is to implement lasting changes that cultivate leadership in the child welfare system.

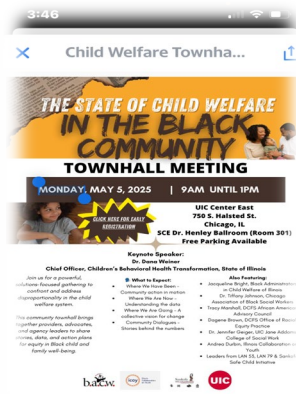
### **2025 Year-At-A-Glance**

The 2025 year was a very defining year for Black Administrators in Child Welfare of Illinois. We continued to focus on our commitment to collaborate with community and human service agencies, addressing ongoing issues that impact families of color. Our priority this year dealt with child welfare leadership professional development, sustaining partnerships that support our endeavors of developing projects, enhancing community outreach with focus on racial healing, inequities, and fundraising.

### **Collaborative Events**

Fiscal Year 2025 began with a continued focus on activities, tasks and planning of programs and initiatives that would enhance community growth and address racial disparities and civic development. In May of this year, BACW-I sponsored a Town Hall Meeting to address the

state of child welfare in the Black community. The event was in partnership with the University of Chicago Permanency Enhancement Project, Illinois Collaboration on Youth, and Sankofa Safe Child Initiative. The town hall meeting brought together providers, advocates, and agency leaders sharing stories, data, and action plans for equity in Black child and family well-being.



Black Administrators in Child Welfare of Illinois received President Biden's Volunteer Service Award presented by BACWI Director Dr. Jackie Sharp.



### ***BACW Illinois Addie Hudson Scholarship***

A scholarship fund was established in 2020 in memory of one of our Charter founding members, Addie Hudson, and in partnership with Tougaloo College Alumni Association. The 2025 Addie Hudson Scholarship was awarded to Rodney E. McClendon, Jr., a senior Music (Vocal Performance) major, and Jaleciah Parker, a senior biology major at Tougaloo College

### ***Illinois Legislative Black Caucus***

The Black Administrators in Child Welfare of Illinois continue to support the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus by advocating for changes in policies that impact families of color in Illinois. We continue to support legislation to reform four key pillars of the Illinois government: criminal justice, education and workforce development, economic access, equity, and opportunity.

### ***Professional Development***

#### ***BACW-I Child Welfare Leadership Institute for Current and Emerging African American Child Welfare Leaders***

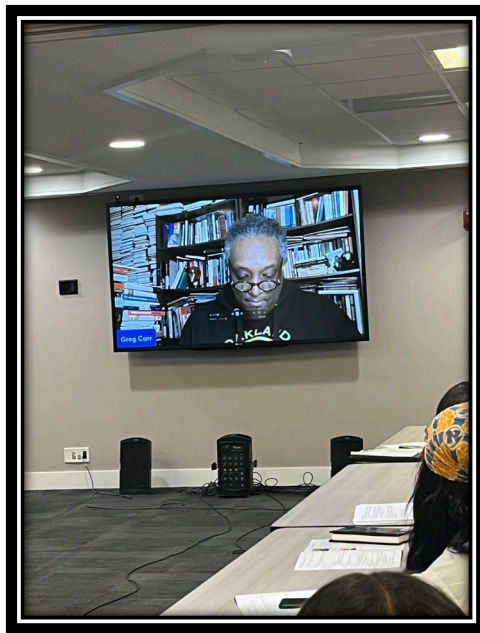
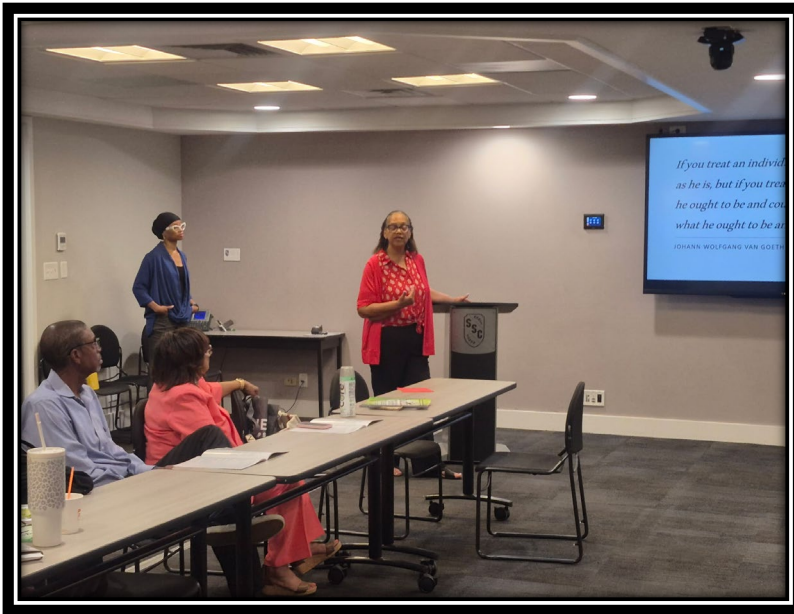
BACW - I continued to sponsor and implement our annual community - based African American Child Welfare Leadership Institute in June 2025. The Institute was held in South Holland, Illinois at South Suburban College. Nine child welfare professionals in Illinois were provided with a platform for capacity building needed for child welfare practice through a racial equity lens. The goal of the Institute was to increase participants' understanding and practice of racial equity, inclusion and fairness in the provision of services to children and families. Our priority is to provide information that will support an increase in the number of African American leaders in the child welfare system throughout Illinois. The curriculum was



based on the Racial Equity Strategy Areas developed by the National Board of Black Administrators in Child Welfare.

The BACW-I Child Welfare Leadership Institute was composed of ten sessions commencing over three days. Presenters in the field of Child Welfare, Health, Education, and Juvenile Justice provided the cohort an opportunity to incubate their experiences, knowledge, wisdom, and ideas required to build a system driven by race-equity.





### ***BACW-I Annual Fundraiser***

In September 2025, BACW-I sponsored an annual fundraiser entitled: “A Reunion for: DCFS & Child Welfare Private Agencies’ Retirees & Current Employees.” The fundraiser gave child welfare professionals throughout the state an opportunity to reunite, fellowship, and support future programs and scholarships. BACW-I also held an awards ceremony during the fundraiser honoring the following community and child welfare leaders in Illinois: Dr. Kimberly A. Mann-recipient of the “*Trailblazer of Change Award*,” Erwin McEwen- recipient of the



*“Visionary Leader in Human Services Award”, Michael Holmes- recipient of the “Community Impact Legacy Award”, Ro’Navyia Smith - recipient of the President’s Youth Leadership Award.*



## **Partnerships**

Chicago Association of Black Social Workers

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services – African American Advisory Council

Permanency Enhancement Program

Sankofa Safe Child Initiative

Lakeside Community Committee

University of Illinois Chicago School of Social Work

**Financial Summary**

Black Administrators in Child Welfare of Illinois maintains a non-profit status. All operational funds are secured from membership dues and donations. Grant funds received are earmarked toward special projects, programs, and events.

**2026 Operational Projections**

To accomplish the overarching goals of community and professional development, the Black Administrators in Child Welfare of Illinois (B.A.C.W.-I) will continue planning and implementing annual programs and activities, including support from community and professional partners in the following areas: Child Welfare Enhancements, Professional Leadership Development, Skill Building, Social Justice, Community Development, and Economic Empowerment.

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