creating change through community-based connection & antiracism education
540WMain is a virtual antiracist education platform that promotes justice for all. We encourage individuals to broaden their horizons and learn more about multidisciplinary topics that impact the world.
540WMain was founded in 2016 as a grassroots community space in the Susan B. Anthony district of Rochester, NY.

Today, our purpose remains unchanged—we provide programming rooted in social justice, with a dedication to neighborhood revitalization. While we now operate as a virtual hub, our headquarters are still located in the neighborhood we will always call home.

Education without borders
540 believes that education should be accessible to all and relevant to communities' lived experiences. Whether it be blog posts, virtual classes, or consulting, all of our work centers antiracism theory and practice.
A better understanding of the social, historical and environmental factors that have led us to the present is essential in creating sustainable and equitable change within our world. It starts with mutually supportive collaboration. 540 emphasizes the importance of connecting with our community in all programming and provides tools for individuals and organizations to create a more just society.

why it matters
A better understanding of the social, historical and environmental factors that have led us to the present is essential in creating sustainable and equitable change within our world.

collaborative learning
It starts with mutually supportive collaboration. 540 emphasizes the importance of connecting with our community in all programming and appropriate compensation of those partners.

we examine topics that matter together
a world where local communities are connected to global topics, leading to an understanding of the complex factors that have led us to the present.

our community is accessible, intersectional and understanding of each others' individuality.
how we act on our vision...

virtual classes & antiracism consulting
community classes for all on a host of topics and consulting with 50+ organizations

annual gentrification conference
unpacking the topic of gentrification in Rochester & beyond with local activists

antiracism fellowship program
mentoring a cohort of engaged social justice leaders in our community

environmental justice is social justice
a first-of-its-kind learning hub for environmental justice lesson plans
Informed Community

We teach about issues that directly impact our students' lived experiences. While 540 hosts a range of topics, all learning is taught from an antiracism and social justice framework.

Accessible Education

All programming runs on a gift economy structure, meaning that we offer flexible pay what you choose options for all learning. All classes include ASL interpreting and captioning.

Intersectional Learning

Our team is Black-led; this makes 540 uniquely positioned to create structural community change in the nonprofit sector which is ~82% white led. Class facilitators come from all walks of life spanning genders, races, abilities, and disciplines.
"I’ve learned how I can take action and unlearn the whitewashed history that I’ve been taught for so long."

"This is an incredible resource that allows me to implement what I am learning into my own work."

"540's classes have opened new doors into my beliefs and perspectives by allowing me to reach the greater Rochester area and create equitable dialogue."
develop a 4H program to foster youth development from an antiracist lens.

include Spanish language interpreters and more ASL interpreters for our education to reach as many community members as possible.

create new class content and expand current offerings in the virtual realm enabling even more dynamic community conversations.