

DONOR STORY

Belton Family Foundation

Marc and Alicia Belton, founders of the Belton Family Foundation, live in Minneapolis with their children Alexander and Gabrielle. They formed the foundation in 2013 to be more strategic in their giving with the goal of supporting and nurturing initiatives that positively impact society.

They sit down annually as a family to review applications of interest and involve their children in the process to instill the importance of giving to others. Before they decide to fund an organization, they look for certain criteria to ensure that it is going to have impact and align with the values that they want to support financially.

The Belton Family Foundation awarded funding to Minnesota Public Radio's (MPR) [In Focus](#) program in 2021. The program is a series of convenings to bring awareness, dialogue, and potential solutions to Minnesota's persistent racial disparities in education, health, economic opportunities and other areas. *In Focus* was a direct outgrowth of the response to the murder of George Floyd. The project gave MPR a proactive way to serve communities historically underserved by MPR and address disparities in a solutions-focused mindset. While not shying away from the challenges or obstacles, *In Focus* highlights the work already happening within communities to address disparities as well as further the conversation on how to solve them.

"It was important to us to support this new program, especially after the wakeup call we all had in 2020," said Alicia. "We live in a tale of two cities, and the fact that MPR is doing something like this to educate people through



(Alicia and Marc Belton, founders of the Belton Family Foundation)

different voices so we can work together more peacefully and pursue justice – it resonated with both of us. We decided we wanted to support the program."

MPR's *In Focus* programming aligns with the Belton Family Foundation's value of transforming minds.

"We are all lifelong learners. As we are exposed to new things, the process of change begins. What is in our minds and hearts drives what we do. When we are operating in empathy with eyes wide open, we start making meaningful change," said Alicia.

The audience served by *In Focus* had positive things to say about the series.

A participant in the [In Focus: How housing can shrink the racial wealth gap](#) virtual discussion said, "I learned so much about organizations that are available for help. I love Angela Davis and all that she does to shine a light on injustice and ways to work through it."