Since Melmark’s founding in 1965, our focus on inclusion and equality has remained intertwined with our mission and includes work at the state and federal policy level to remove barriers to special education and disability services across Pennsylvania, New England, and the Carolinas as well as advocacy toward equal pay for equal work for our employees. Our work is ongoing and we realize there is much to be done. Some of the important efforts Melmark has taken to lead real change throughout our communities from 1965 to the present are organized under the headings below and include:

### Continually building on our history of leadership and delivering on our mission

- **EST. 2022**
  - Ongoing Today
  - A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan, including strategic goals, objectives and key performance indicators developed; foundation of overall Strategic Plan
  - Formation of a Cross-Divisional DEI Committee, with DEI Leaders and Cultural Ambassadors in each division

- **EST. 2021**
  - Ongoing Today
  - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training with Senior Leadership led by the Institute for Diversity Certification; 19 senior leaders credentialed as Certified Diversity Executives

- **EST. 2020**
  - Ongoing Today
  - National informational presentations on trends, wage suppression, pay equity and the work of Direct Service Providers in Pennsylvania

- **EST. 2018**
  - Ongoing Today
  - Melmark Carolinas founded in response to children in North and South Carolinas, often minorities, denied access to Free Appropriate Public Education through homebound instruction

- **EST. 2015**
  - Ongoing Today
  - Enhancing diversity among leadership teams across divisions
  - Building race, gender, and expertise diversity among Board of Directors members

- **EST. 2012**
  - Ongoing Today
  - Melmark’s first Residential Treatment Facility opened in Pennsylvania serving a significant number of children from diverse backgrounds and high intensity behavioral needs
Serving our communities

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion updates communicated regularly, internally in bi-weekly newsletters and externally on the website and in print and online publications

Website display with language translation services

Increased translation services provided to Melmark families in various formats such as town halls and newsletters, and clinical meetings

Development of internship opportunities in partnership with the Notre Dame Cristo Rey High School network’s corporate work-study program, which serves predominantly, racially diverse underserved students

Collaboration with the Massachusetts Special Commission Relative to Autism to ensure equal access to autism programs for all children, adults, and their families

Expert Speaker Series addressing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion matters, open to all staff, families, and community members
Ensuring culturally responsive, equitable care

- **Collaboration on the Autism Omnibus Bill;** A requirement that MassHealth cover medically necessary treatments for children with Autism who are under 21 years of age, improving access and equity to services
  - *Established in 2010*
  - Ongoing Today

- **Review of statewide restraint data including analyzing why students of color in Massachusetts have increased restraints**
  - *Established in 2009*
  - Ongoing Today

- **Work with the Boston Mayor’s Summit on Autism to enhance equal access to education and related services for all students**
  - *Established in 2007*
  - Ongoing Today

- **Participation in policy development across state divisions, collaborating with Massachusetts Advocates for Children**
  - **Medicaid Waiver Program for children from diverse Massachusetts communities facing socioeconomic and language barriers**
  - **Contract with Lawrence Public School District in MA to improve services for 250+ children with diverse backgrounds**
  - *Established in 2006*
  - Ongoing Today

- **Relationships with governmental entities for underserved communities to bring equality to service availability**
  - *Established in 2005*
  - Ongoing Today

- **Work with the Autism Commission Earmark for underserved communities**
  - *Established in 2004*
  - Ongoing Today

- **Work with Advocates for Autism of Massachusetts to ensure access to all adult services, for diverse individuals**
  - *Established in 1990’s*
  - Ongoing Today

- **Collaboration with Pennsylvania’s Department of Human Services**
  - *Established in 2009*
  - Ongoing Today
Increasing opportunity, inclusion and belonging in the workplace

**Introduction of Cultural Ambassador roles to collaborate with leadership and the DEI committee on policy development, communications, and professional development opportunities across divisions**

**Advocacy for equal pay for equal work for Direct Support Professionals, in Pennsylvania, bringing to statewide government agencies and trade associations.**

**Ensuring the diversity of leadership staff through clear professional career path opportunities and plan**

**Increasing access to professional credentials for all Melmark staff through the development of an affordable graduate training program with tuition reimbursement from Melmark. What began in partnership with the University of Massachusetts, has expanded to multiple relationships with colleges and universities across Melmark’s state divisions.**