


# Massachusetts Brewers Participate in the Black is Beautiful Initiative

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## *TO RAISE AWARENESS AND FUNDS TO FIGHT RACISM AND ADVOCATE FOR POLICE BRUTALITY REFORM*

The Black is Beautiful initiative is a nationwide effort across the brewing community and craft beer customers, with the goal to bring awareness to the injustices that many people of color face daily.

Launched by African American owned Weathered Souls Brewing Company, located in Texas, the founders asked breweries from across the country to sign on to the collaboration by utilizing the base stout recipe they've provided to create a "Black is Beautiful" beer with 100% of the beer's proceeds going back to foundations that support police brutality reform and legal defenses for those who have been wronged.

The base recipe was designed to be a moderately high ABV stout to showcase different shades of black.

Participating breweries choose their own local organizations that support equality and inclusion. Those who sign onto the project are also asked to look internally and commit to the long-term work of equality. The goal is to bridge the gap that's been around for ages and provide a platform to show that the brewing community is an inclusive place for everyone of any color.

To date, sixteen local breweries have joined the effort including 3cross Fermentation Coop., Aeronaut Brewing Co., Big Elm Brewing Co., Bright Ideas Brewing Co., Brockton Beer Co., Castle Island Brewing Co., Gentile Brewing Co., Harpoon Brewing Co., Lost Shoes Brewing & Roasting Co., Old Planters Brewing Co., Samuel Adams Boston Taproom & Brewery, Trillium Brewing, True North Ale Co., Vitamin Sea Brewing, White Lion Brewing Co. and Wormtown Brewery.

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"As a black owned brewery we diversify a predominately white brewing culture. Since our launch we have been able to bridge the gap in our black and brown communities and will continue to model the way," says Ray Berry, owner of White Lion brewing Co. "If we don't hold true to our core values and be a voice for change, we failed on principle." White Lion Brewing Co. has teamed up with Trillium Co. to create a 9% Imperial Stout that will be available in August. Proceeds will benefit the Healing Racism Institute of Pioneer Valley, located in Springfield, Mass.

Nearly 80 percent of craft beer consumers in Massachusetts are white, and there are only six African American owned breweries across the state.

Aeronaut Brewing Co.'s Black is Beautiful Beer will be available starting on July 16 and sold at the brewery for pick-up and home delivery. They'll also distribute to local shops throughout Cambridge, Somerville and across the state.

"We've had many discussions on how we can take our allyship to the next level through internal and external actions – so we were very excited to see this project come about. We love the collaborative spirit across the brewing industry and love the opportunity to connect with fellow brewers, near and far," says Lee Hatfield, communications manager for Aeronaut Brewing Co. Aeronaut's 6.2% Oatmeal Stout is brewed with a blend of chocolate malt, roasted barley, Midnight Wheat and Cascade hops, along with a generous proportion of flaked oats. This beer will support the ACLU and its mission to preserve the individual rights and liberties of every person in this country.

"True North Ales is committed to doing our part to eradicate systemic racism. One way that we can do that is through raising awareness. Ipswich and the surrounding communities are not very diverse," says Gary Rogers, owner of True North Ale Co., "Offering the Black Is Beautiful brew from our Taproom will serve to raise awareness and start conversations that we hope will lead to real change."

3cross Fermentation Coop. has always been centered around the ideals of community and inclusion, so when the project was launched they knew right away that this was an effort they wanted to get behind, owner Dave Howland said in an email. They brewery plans to split donations between two local organizations – the Worcester chapter of the NAACP and Legendary Legacies, a local organization that provides positive male role models for young men in vulnerable populations.

When the Mass Brewers Guild formed its Diversity and Inclusion committee a year and a half ago, it did so to address and to better understand the barriers that exist within the communities that surround our brewery's walls. Taprooms typically serve as gathering places and neighborhood revitalizers. Yet, the employees and patrons in our establishments don't reflect the neighborhoods they reside in.

"Historically the craft beer industry has not worked very hard to be welcoming to people of color, and that's something we need to change," says Katie Stinchon, executive director of the Mass Brewers Guild. "The burden is on us as an industry, as businesses, and as individuals to do better. Our work to look within and create meaningful change continues. The Black is Beautiful initiative is a great first step, one of many that we hope to foster in the years to come."

The Mass Brewers Guild Diversity & Inclusion Committee, made up of board members, brewery members and associate members, will continue this important work to bring education and best practices home to the state's breweries.

## ABOUT THE MASS BREWERS GUILD DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

The Mass Brewers Guild is committed to ensuring that everyone feels welcome in our breweries – as patrons and employees. We do this by identifying and overcoming barriers to inclusion. We work to create a unified voice that celebrates our collective uniqueness and leverages our differences for a stronger community. Our passion for great beer unites us. Together, we can create an industry that embraces our diversity and is open to all people.

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