

## PROJECT STEP HONORS LECOLION WASHINGTON WITH 2026 WILLIAM MOYER CHAMPION OF CHANGE AWARD

*Project STEP highlights Washington's transformative work in arts equity as he becomes the second honoree of the award named for Project STEP founder Bill Moyer*

**BOSTON, Mass. – January 5, 2026** – [Project STEP](#), a nonprofit dedicated to advancing equity in classical music by providing comprehensive string education to underrepresented youth, is thrilled to name Lecolion Washington, Executive Director of Community Music Center of Boston, as its 2026 recipient of the William Moyer Champion of Change Award. Washington will be honored during STEP's annual fundraiser, **STEP into Grace**, on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, at *Grace by Nia* in Boston's Seaport District.

The William Moyer Champion of Change Award celebrates the legacy of Project STEP's founder, William (Bill) Moyer. Moyer's visionary leadership and unwavering commitment to equity in classical music were foundational to the creation of Project STEP. The award recognizes individuals who champion diversity, expand access, and make a lasting impact in the arts and beyond, embodying Moyer's principles and Project STEP's core values of community, collaboration, and excellence.

"We are deeply honored to name Lecolion Washington the second recipient of the William Moyer Champion of Change Award," said Élider DiPaula, Executive Director of Project STEP. "Lecolion is the living embodiment of Bill Moyer's vision. Through his leadership at the Community Music Center of Boston, his trailblazing PRIZM Festival, his performances from Carnegie Hall to the world stage, and his lifelong mentorship of young Black and Brown artists, he builds pathways, breaks barriers, and proves every day that classical music belongs to everyone. No one carries Bill's legacy forward more powerfully than Lecolion."

Washington currently serves as Executive Director of Community Music Center of Boston, following his tenure as Co-Founder and Executive Director of the PRIZM Ensemble in Memphis from 2009 to 2017, and as founder of the PRIZM International Chamber Music Festival. As a bassoonist, Washington has performed solo recitals, led master classes, and appeared as a feature solo and chamber musician at colleges, universities and concert stages across the U.S., Brazil, South Africa, Canada, Switzerland and beyond. He has also performed as guest principal and co-principal bassoon with orchestras such as the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and the Sphinx Symphony Orchestra.

"I am deeply honored to receive this award, which celebrates the legacy of Project STEP's founder, Bill Moyer," said Washington. "Music has always been an important part of my personal and professional life, but as a young black bassoonist in Texas, I didn't always have accessible opportunities for music education. This recognition strengthens my commitment to ensuring that all young people can find their place in the arts."

Washington's leadership has been recognized nationally, including honors such as *Memphis Business Journal's* Top 40 Under 40, a *Musical America* "Top Professional of the Year," and a

Boston HUBWeek “Change Maker.” Washington is widely sought-after as a speaker and thought leader in DEI and racial equity in the arts, presenting at conferences such as the Chamber Music America Conference, Sphinx Connect, the National Flute Conference, and the National Guild for Community Arts Education Conference.

## **About Project STEP**

Project STEP (String Training Education Program) is dedicated to providing high-quality, long-term music education for students historically underrepresented in classical music. Offering instruction in violin, viola, cello, and double bass, Project STEP goes beyond traditional music programs by combining exceptional training with essential support services and scholarships. Through up to 12 years of rigorous study, students develop not only musical excellence but also perseverance, confidence, leadership, and a strong work ethic. These skills empower them to succeed in both musical and non-musical fields, becoming role models and mentors in their families and communities. Project STEP’s comprehensive approach breaks down socio-economic barriers, opening doors to a future filled with opportunity. To learn more about Project STEP, visit <https://www.projectstep.org/>.