



JANUARY 13, 2024

CIVIC SUMMIT

COMMUNITY OVER EVERYTHING

M. Lee Pelton

President and CEO of The Boston Foundation

Lee Pelton believes that nurturing the humanistic spirit goes hand in hand with confronting and trying to solve the urgent moral and social problems of the moment. This belief has fueled his lifelong commitment to educational excellence and social justice and influenced his long career in academia, his lifelong service as a civic leader and most recently, his leadership of the Boston Foundation.

In 2021, Lee Pelton was named President and CEO of the Boston Foundation, one of the first and most influential community foundations in the country which has been serving the Greater Boston community since 1915. Pelton has positioned the organization as an agent for social change by centering equity in its programs, grantmaking and civic leadership. Today the Foundation's defining ambition is to achieve equity, which first involves acknowledging and then seeking to eliminate the structural and underlying causes of outcome disparities for historically marginalized communities.

Prior to joining the Boston Foundation, Pelton spent his career in academia, most recently as President of Emerson College in Boston, where he catapulted the college's reputation to one of a global hub of arts and communication. While at Emerson he also emerged as a regional and national voice on social issues. His essay, *America is on Fire*, which he wrote following the murder of George Floyd in May 2020, reflects powerfully on the significance of Floyd's death with a frank and honest reference to his own experiences in America. The essay, read by more than 6 million people, was ranked by *Forbes Magazine* as one of the five most noteworthy writings that appeared after the George



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Floyd incident.

His impact can be felt throughout Greater Boston and the Commonwealth and his work to advance equity and empower communities has been recognized by many organizations, including Boston Magazine's 2022 ranking him as the third most influential person in Boston, trailing Governor Maura Healy and Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley. His most recent honors include being named a 2021 Living Legend by the Boston Museum of African American History, induction into the Boston Chamber of Commerce's Academy of Distinguished Bostonians and the Massachusetts Humanities Council Governor's Award in 2020 and most recently, becoming named a Massachusetts Women's Political Caucus Winners Circle recipient for his work to elevate and support the causes that empower women and women leaders in the Commonwealth.

Becoming a Civic Leader - Training the Next Generation of Leaders

2:00 PM - 2:45 PM

Join us at "Becoming a Civic Leader" an interactive panel discussion moderated by Chief Brianna Millor of the Community Engagement Cabinet. Gain essential skills for effective community leadership from M. Lee Pelton, president and CEO of The Boston Foundation, Matthew Broude, Co-founder of The Queer Neighborhood Council, Commissioner Kristen McCosh, the city's Disability Commissioner and President of BU SOCA and youth leader Brianna Bourne. This session will delve into understanding civic roles, developing key leadership traits, mastering community engagement, and navigating ethical dilemmas. This panel promises to inspire and transform your approach to civic leadership.