

# DOS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

## HAPPY NOVEMBER!

Hello from the DEIA team!

November is **Native American Heritage Month**. The United States is the ancestral homelands of hundreds of Indigenous nations who have stewarded the lands and waterways of our country and state for generations. This month, we honor the history and resiliency of Native American and Indigenous Peoples. To learn more, please see the flyer about Native American Heritage Month attached in this newsletter.

This month also has two month-long health and wellness awareness events that we want to share. One is **No-Shave November**, when people chose to not shave or cut their hair to raise cancer awareness while donating the money they would have spent on personal grooming to cancer charities. Another is **Movember**, when people are encouraged to grow moustaches to bring attention to male health and wellness. Information about No-Shave November and Movember can be found in this newsletter.

In this issue, we are excited to introduce the new DEIA Deputy Director Jea Frasier! Welcome to the team, Jea!

We're also adding a DEIA in Action section to highlight some of the exciting and innovative DEIA work happening across the Department. Be sure to check it out!

Since the last newsletter, we had our virtual Diwali Celebration and Learning Share. Thank you to all who attended and to our wonderful community members who spoke as part of the celebration!

Other updates include a new alternative **wellness room** in Albany, exciting updates on **DEIJA-B Working Groups**, and news about the upcoming **Dr. King Food Drive!**

Thank you all for making DOS a more diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible space. Because of this work, DOS becomes a better employer and workspace for all.

Yours in partnership and service,

Nicole Jean Christian and the DEIA Team

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The Department of State strives to create an inclusive environment for all, which includes partnering to assist with any accessibility needs or requirements.

Reasonable accommodation requests must be sent via email to [ReasonableAccommodationsMailbox@dos.ny.gov](mailto:ReasonableAccommodationsMailbox@dos.ny.gov) at least two (2) business days before the event.

## CONTACT US

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Do you have any upcoming events that celebrate DEIA at DOS? Want to contribute to the DEIA newsletter?

Contact Norie Wright at [diversityandinclusion@dos.ny.gov](mailto:diversityandinclusion@dos.ny.gov) to let us know!



Please note December newsletter content deadline of December 10th

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## November is Native American Heritage Month



We gratefully acknowledge the Indigenous nations and people who stewarded the land we now refer to as New York for generations before the arrival of European colonists. The land we now refer to as Albany is the traditional home of the **Kanien'keháka** (People of the Flint) and **Muh-he-con-neok** (People of the Waters that are Never Still) peoples, more commonly known as the **Mohawk Haudenosaunee** and **Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans**.

We pay respect to elders both past and present and honor the ancestral stewards of this land as we seek to dismantle the on-going violence and repression of Indigenous Peoples and cultures in our efforts as public leaders and servants.

**For the rest of the month, we invite you all to use this [virtual background](#) to celebrate Native American Heritage Month.**

Please see the below resources to learn more about Native American Heritage Month:

- [About Native American Heritage Month \(Library of Congress\)](#)
- [First Peoples Exhibition \(New York State Museum\)](#)
- [Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohicans Official Website](#)
- [Haudenosaunee Confederacy Official Website](#)
- [North American Indigenous Center of New York](#)

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## No-Shave November for Cancer Awareness and Movember for Male Health



**No-Shave November** is a tradition where participants forgo shaving, haircuts, and hair removal for the entire month to raise awareness and start conversations about cancer prevention. Participants are encouraged to donate the money they would have spent on grooming and hair care to cancer charities.

**Movember** is another month-long tradition where people grow moustaches to raise awareness about male health issues, such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and general wellness.

By growing and celebrating hair, something that cancer patients commonly lose during treatment, we can have conversations about wellness and health in a lighthearted and informative way. Discussing cancer screenings and general health can spread awareness, educate people, and save lives.

**See the below resources to learn more:**

- [What is Movember or No Shavember anyway? \(CNN\)](#)
- [No-Shave November Official Website](#)
- [No-Shave November Campaign Sign Ups \(American Cancer Fund\)](#)
- [Movember Official Website](#)

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## NY DOS Celebrates Veterans Day

Monday November 11th marked Veterans Day. The observance of Veterans Day was recently restored to November 11<sup>th</sup> to honor the end of World War I. This preserves the historical significance of the date and focuses attention on the purpose of Veterans Day: **to honor all of America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.**

**More articles and resources on the significance of Veteran's Day are available below:**

- The most updated version of the [Civil Service 55b/c flyer](#) for reference, use, and recruitment efforts
- [Proclamation making November 11<sup>th</sup> the Official Veterans Day \(The White House\)](#)
- [The Department of Defense Education Activity Veterans Day Message](#)

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## Recognizing Transgender Day of Remembrance

November 20<sup>th</sup> is Transgender Day of Remembrance, **a day to commemorate the transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming people who have been targeted and killed for living authentically and courageously.** Transgender and gender non-conforming individuals are a part of every culture and have existed through out history. DOS affirms the human rights of transgender persons and will continue be a safe workplace where all community members belong.

**Please see the links below to learn more about Transgender Day of Remembrance:**

- [GLAAD's Website about Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)
- [Honoring Transgender Awareness Week and Transgender Day of Remembrance \(Human Rights Campaign\)](#)
- [Transgender Day of Remembrance \(The LGBT Community Center\)](#)
- [YouTube: "Transgender Day of Remembrance: What's at stake and becoming a better ally" \(CBS New York\)](#)

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## Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Statewide Food Drive



The 25<sup>th</sup> annual **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Statewide Food Drive** is coming up!

DOS is proud to be one of over 30 State agencies participating this year and **collection has officially started** in the Albany office!

Collection boxes are near the elevators on the following floors:

- 5th floor – 1 box (front elevator only)
- 6th floor – 2 boxes
- 10th floor – 1 box (front elevator only)
- 11th floor – 2 boxes
- 15th – 2 boxes

We are accepting **unopened, unexpired food and pantry items**. Monetary donations may be made directly to the Northeast Regional Food Bank at <https://give.regionalfoodbank.net/>. **Make sure to say you are donating on behalf of DOS for the MLK Food Drive in the comment section!**

We hope that you will join us in making a difference! To learn more, visit the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Statewide Food Drive website located [here](#).

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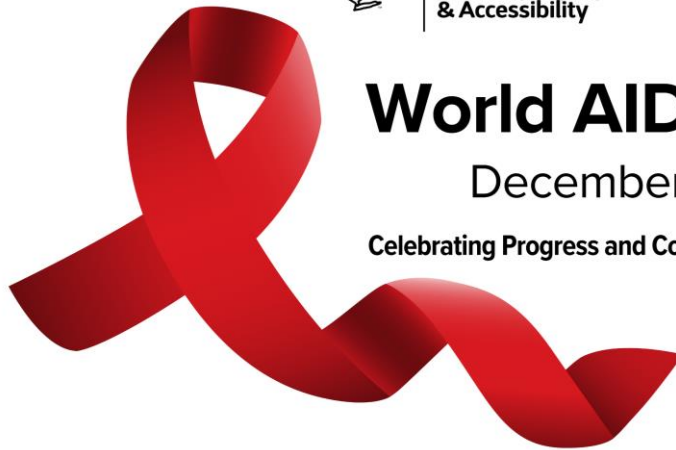


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## December 1<sup>st</sup> is World AIDS Day



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### World AIDS Day

December 1st

Celebrating Progress and Continuing the Fight

December 1<sup>st</sup> will be World AIDS Day. This annual event serves as a reminder that we must remain steadfast in our commitment to prevent HIV infections and provide essential services to all people living with HIV and AIDS.

While significant progress has been made over the last several decades in creating effective treatments and increasing awareness, **we must continue to fight for new scientific advancements, better implementations of research, and ending the stigma of testing and treatment.**

On December 1<sup>st</sup>, wear red to show your support for World AIDS Day!

#### See the attached resources for more information:

- [United Nations Information about World AIDS Day \(UNAIDS\)](#)
- [CDC's Information about World AIDS Day](#)
- [US Department of Health & Human Services' HIV Website](#)
- [The International AIDS Society](#)

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# DOS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

## Want to form a DEIJA-B Working Group in *your Division*?

DOS-wide Working Groups are coming in Spring 2025!

Following the successful pilot of the OPDCI Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, Accessibility and Belonging (DEIJA-B) Working Group, the DEIA team is proud to announce that more Working Groups are set to form across DOS in Spring 2025!

These Groups will use the existing DEIJA-B Working Group framework with supportive guidance and leadership from the DOS DEIA team. Groups will consist of Division members at every level working collaboratively within the Group as well as with the DEIA team to address division-specific DEIA needs as well as potential actions and interventions.

By working with volunteers from each division, the DEIA team can better empower DOS to be a more diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible working environment that better serves the people of New York.

**If you are interested in forming a Working Group in your division or office, email us at [diversityandinclusion@dos.ny.gov](mailto:diversityandinclusion@dos.ny.gov)!**



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# DOS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

## Introducing Jea Frasier, DEIA Deputy Director



The DEIA team is excited to introduce Jea Frasier, Deputy Director of DEIA at the New York Department of State.

A yogi and social worker who is passionate about co-creating spaces of healing and liberation, Jea (all pronouns) previously served as the Edie Windsor, Marsha P. Johnson, and Sylvia Rivera LGBTQ Fellow in the Governor's Office. In this role, they supported the efforts of the Chief Diversity Officer in optimizing New York State agency diversity and inclusion goals, increasing BIPOC representation across State agencies, and advancing LGBTQ equity across State government through policy and content expertise, project management, and legislative tracking.

Before this, their areas of work included fundraising and digital strategy, curriculum design, training and group facilitation centered on issues of racial equity, trauma and somatic embodiment, and youth empowerment.

Jea received their BS in Journalism from Northwestern University and their MSW from the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College.

We are extremely excited to welcome Jea to the DOS community and are looking forward to working with them. They are based in Albany, so be sure to welcome them the next time you see them!

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## Commissions Corner *with Kristopher Malone*

*I am excited to share current news regarding the African American History and AAPI Commissions!*

*To review the NYSCAAH report from June, [click here](#).*

*Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, comments, or concerns. I wish you all a very happy November and thank you all for your continued support.*

*Onward and upward,*

*Kristopher Malone (he/him)*



### African American History Commission

Nicole Jean Christian and I presented at the Schomburg Center in NYC on October 23<sup>rd</sup> for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NYS Revolutionary War with the NYS 250<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Commission.

We were inspired by speakers Constance Keohoe, Jacqueline Stapleton, and Andrea Smith who each eloquently spoke on the diversity of perspectives and parallels of Black History during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. To learn more about the 250<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Commission, [click here](#).

This month, we will meet with the Erie Canal Commission as we prepare for the Erie Canal 2025 Celebration next year.

### Asian American and Pacific Islander Commission

On behalf of the AAPI Commission, we are excited to announce that the New York Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Commission Inaugural Meeting is coming up in December! The RSVP and invitation is being created and will be available within the coming weeks.

We are extremely excited about the inauguration of the AAPI Commission and look forward to seeing you all there!

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## DEIA in Action with Lizzy Mogus Garcia

*This section of the DOS DEIA newsletter is a space to highlight and celebrate different ways we are furthering the mission of DEIA in our work.*

*Please reach out to me with any questions or comments. Happy November to you all and thank you for all you do to further the mission of DEIA at DOS and beyond.*

*Sincerely,*

*Lizzy Mogus Garcia (she/they)*



### Community Climate Sessions Series Sustainable and Resilient Communities Session

Environmental and Climate Justice is a major part of DEIA efforts in government, and we work closely with community partners to elevate this as equity in action all year long.

As part of this, OPDCI hosted a Community Climate Session event on November 16<sup>th</sup> in Middle Island, NY. We partnered with Brookhaven NAACP, Suffolk County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., and the Greater Gordon Heights Chamber of Commerce to host activities related to climate change, community preparation, and resilience. It was a productive session, and we are looking forward to doing more soon!



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## Thank you to everyone who celebrated Diwali with us!

We are grateful to everyone who participated in this informative and celebratory Learning Share on October 29th. This is where we belong - *together!*



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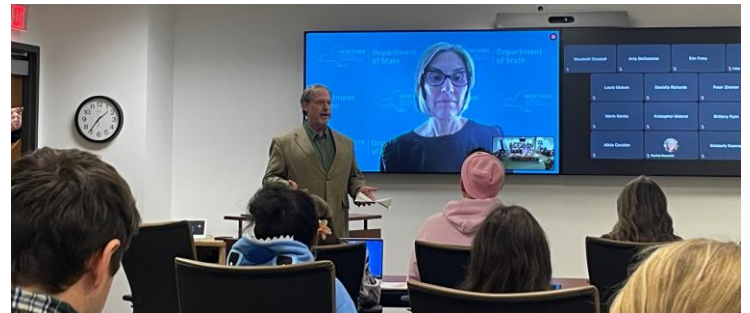
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## OPDCI's 2<sup>nd</sup> DEIJAB-versary Celebration

The DOS DEIA team was honored to be invited to OPDCI's 2<sup>nd</sup> DEIJAB-versary Celebration that happened on October 31<sup>st</sup>!

OPDCI has been an innovator in DEIJAB programming and fulfilling the mission of making the Department of State a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.

A big thank you to OPDCI for the invite and for all the work you do furthering DEIA at DOS!



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# DOS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

## Alternative Wellness Room Coming to the Albany Office



Due to the popularity of the Albany office's Room 601, the DOS DEIA team is excited to announce that an alternative wellness room will be created for DOS employees!

Located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, this room will be a private and comfortable space for lactation, prayer, meditation, and overall wellness for DOS employees. This room is available as an alternative room when the primary Room 601 is booked.

To book these rooms once ready, use the address of **[dos.rm.Alb99.WellnessRoom](#)**.

To indicate it is booked, employees should put their schedules down on the back of the door.

Room 601 is currently used for purposes such as a lactation space, prayer room, etc. BASS is looking into getting a more comfortable chair for this room and will provide updates once available.

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## DPM 100 - Be Counted!

The Department of Civil Service has improved self-identification options for demographic data collection, expanding options for gender, ethnicity/race, language, LGBTQ+, disability, and veteran status! **These changes make voluntary self-identification more inclusive and gives New York State a better, more accurate picture of who employees are.** Better data means ensuring the State workforce represents the diversity of our state and **shapes statewide strategic planning to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion for the future.**

**Want to be counted?** Update your demographic data [here](#) or scan this QR code to access the web app!



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## Regional Clusters

Regional Cluster visits allow teams to connect, learn from one other, share insights, and see each other as partners and collaborators regardless of agency titles and division affiliation.

Clusters are all about connection and advancing our core mission: “to provide a better quality of life and expand opportunities for all New Yorkers by fostering community revitalization [and] catalyzing economic growth”.

Two Regional Clusters are coming up in December in **Long Island** and **Buffalo** – we are looking forward to seeing you folx there!

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## DOS's Anti-Discrimination Policy Monthly Notice

The Department of State and the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (OER) reminder of the policies and processes regarding investigation of employee discrimination complaints. This reminder will be sent out routinely to ensure that staff are aware of the State's anti-discrimination policy and how to file a complaint.

The OER Anti-Discrimination Investigations Divisions (ADID) is responsible for investigating allegations of protected class discrimination. Any employee who has been subjected to any discrimination, bias, prejudice, harassment or retaliation, based on any of the protected classes, may submit a complaint form directly to ADID via the webform located [here](#).

Employees, contractors, or interns at New York State Executive Agencies are not required to notify supervisors, human resources staff, or management before filing a complaint. Once you fill in the necessary information, the complaint is automatically submitted to ADID for review.

Additional information can be found in [the Equal Employment Opportunity Rights and Responsibilities Handbook for New York State Employees \(\*Handbook\*\)](#). The Handbook is the State's anti-discrimination policy.

Supervisory or other staff who are *required* to report allegations of discrimination (e.g., managers, agency Executive staff, Counsel's Office, Human Resources staff) are reminded that if an employee comes to you to report behaviors/interactions that could be protected-class employment discrimination, or if you witness such behaviors/interactions, you *must* report this to OER. You are required to report any such allegations, even if the employee asks you not to, says they were "just venting" or otherwise indicates they do not want the behaviors/interactions investigated. As an additional reminder, complaints and all parties involved must maintain the confidential nature of this process. Discussion outside of the formal investigation process is prohibited.

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