

DOS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

HAPPY BLACK HISTORY MONTH!

Greetings and happy February from the DEIA team!

February is Black History Month, a time to reflect upon the resilience and accomplishments of Black and African descended individuals throughout history. The 2025 Black History Month theme, **“African Americans in Labor”**, reflects on intersections between Black people’s work and workplaces in all their iterations and key moments across time and space, throughout New York, the United States, and the world.

In honor of Black History Month, **join Secretary Mosley and the DEIA team across the state for a Cultural Awareness presentation and workshop on Black History Month.** See attached flyer for details and how to register.

February also is home to World Cancer Day on the 4th and World Day of Social Justice on the 20th. Resources on both are available in this newsletter.

Interested in co-presenting and facilitating upcoming DEIA Learning Shares? Let us know! Sign up information is included in this newsletter.

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Statewide Food Drive ends February 18th, so be sure to drop off donations in person or make your monetary donation at the links provided.

Finally, we are excited to introduce the **Recommended Reading Corner** to the DEIA newsletter! Check out this list of media resources that are relevant to current DEIA events and celebrations.

While February is one month dedicated to uplifting Black history, **celebrating diversity and advancing racial equity is a year-round effort that benefits everyone.** Thank you all for everything you do to make DOS a more diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible space for all during the entire year.

Yours in partnership and service,

Nicole Jean Christian and the DEIA Team

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UPCOMING EVENTS

February 18 & 26, 2025 **DOS Black History Month Discovery Series**

Times vary

Virtual

See attached flyer to learn more

February 19, 2025 **Black History Month Celebration and Learning Share**

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

In-person program locations in Albany, NYC, and Buffalo

See attached flyer to learn more

February 27, 2025 **NYS Department of Civil Service Black History Month Celebration**

11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Huxley Theater, NYS Museum, Albany

Please be aware that photographs may be taken during both virtual and in-person events. By attending, you consent to your image being captured and used in promotional materials, social media, and other related communications. **If you do not wish to be photographed, please contact the DEIA team prior to the event.** Thank you for your understanding

The New York 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 maybe be sent via email to ReasonableAccommodationsMailbox@dos.ny.gov **at least two (2) business days before the event.**

Questions about Reasonable Accommodations?

Email Shannon Cornwall (she/her) at diversityandinclusion@dos.ny.gov



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The New York State Department of State presents

BLACK HISTORY MONTH DISCOVERY SERIES

Join us for a series of **100% virtual** Lunch and Learn Lectures from experts on Black History in New York State

Lecture 1:

**Our Whole History:
Enslavement to Freedom**

Guest Speaker



Lavada Nahon

INTERPRETER OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY, PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Tuesday,
February 11, 2025



1 PM to 1:30 PM

Lecture 2:

**Migration and Movements:
Afrofuturism in Black History**

Guest Speaker



Dr. Georgette Grier-Key

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF CURATOR, EASTVILLE COMMUNITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Tuesday,
February 18, 2025



12 PM to 12:30 PM

Lecture 3:

**LGBTQ+ History is
Black History**

Guest Speaker



Lee Soulja-Simmons

FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NYC CENTER FOR BLACK PRIDE



Wednesday,
February 26, 2025



1 PM to 1:30 PM

Register now at the **link below** or by scanning the **QR code!**



<https://forms.office.com/g/Lj0zASAUYK>



BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2025

DOS “TEAM CELEBRATION”

Join us in Albany or Virtually!

Join **Secretary of State Walter Mosley** and the **DEIA team** for a special presentation and discussion about the 2025 Black History Month theme, **“African Americans and Labor.”** This will be an interactive event with activities and time to discuss this year’s theme.

Learn about the labor movement, civil rights, and Black History and participate in a facilitated activity!

- The origin and journey of Black History Month.
- Principles and significance of Black History Month.
- Activities, music, and art associated with the celebration.

The event will be hosted virtually and in-person.



Wednesday, February 19, 2025



1:00 pm to 1:30 pm **



- Albany Office – **5th Flr, Conference Rm 505**
- NYC Office – **20th Flr, Executive Conference Rm**
- Buffalo Office – **8th Flr, Rm 803**



Click here to attend virtually or in-person by **February 14th.**



Walter T. Mosley
SECRETARY OF STATE



Department of State
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“We are here for **everyone!**”



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**We draft it,
you share it!**

Want to share your culture with fellow DOS staff?

The DEIA Team is Looking for Volunteer Presenters and Facilitators!

Be a part of upcoming cultural awareness events at DOS:

- **Women's History Month** (March 2025)
- **Ramadan and Eid** (March 2025)
- **Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month** (May 2025)
- **LGBTQIA+ Pride Month** (June 2025)
- **Juneteenth** (June 2025)

Sign up to connect with us!
Click the link below or scan the QR Code:

<https://forms.office.com/g/HU7aHzdLTE>



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February 4 was World Cancer Day



Since 2000, World Cancer Day has been observed every February 4 to raise awareness about cancer, encourage prevention, and mobilize action to address the global cancer epidemic.

By catalyzing action, we all work together to reimagine a world where millions of cancer deaths are prevented and access to life-saving cancer treatment and care is equitable for all - no matter who you are or where you live.

World Cancer Day's theme for 2025 is “United by Unique”, exploring different dimensions of people-centered cancer care and new ways of making a difference. People are more than a diagnosis, more than a disease, more than a patient, and more than a caregiver.

See the attached resources for more information :

- [Official World Cancer Day Website \(Union for International Cancer Control\)](#)
- [What is Cancer? Homepage \(NYSDOH\)](#)
- [State Cancer Registry and Cancer Statistics \(NYSDOH\)](#)

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World Day of Social Justice on February 20

February 20 is the World Day of Social Justice, a United Nations commemorative day recognizing the need to promote social justice as part of larger efforts to address poverty, exclusion, gender inequality, unemployment, human rights, and social protections around the world.

Social justice permeates throughout issues in all our work at DOS, from eradicating poverty to uplifting marginalized voices to encouraging economic growth.

See the resources below for more:

- [Official Website for World Day of Social Justice \(United Nations\)](#)
- [World Day of Social Justice Event Information \(United Nations\)](#)
- [Social Justice Division of the New York State Attorney General](#)
- [New York State Senate Social Justice Issue Tracker](#)



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Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Statewide Food Drive *ENDING FEBRUARY 18*



Collections end February 18 in the Albany and NYC offices, but there is still time to make a difference!

There are two ways to donate before February 18:

- **Drop off** unopened, unexpired food, pantry, and toiletry items in non-glass packaging at boxes located in Albany and NYC. Wondering what to buy? Check out our [Food Drive Shopping List](#)!
- **Make donations online** directly to the [Northeast Regional Food Bank](#). **Make sure to say you are donating on behalf of DOS for the MLK Food Drive in the comment section of your donation!**

See more about this year's Dr. King program at [the 2025 Program Journal](#).

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Visit the Enslavement to Freedom Exhibit at the Empire State Plaza Concourse!



On August 29, 1627, twenty-two kidnapped and captured Africans arrived on a Dutch slave ship to what is now New York for the first time.

In 1827, 200 years after this arrival of enslaved Africans, New York legally ended slavery, but did not free all the enslaved people in the state.

The dynamic and widely overlooked history of Black and African presence in New York plays an influential role in understanding the whole of New York State history, along with the state's role in national and global development.

The goal of **the Enslavement to Freedom project** is to share the whole history of Africans and their descendants from their first arrival as enslaved people to legal freedom to today.

If you are interested in learning more about the Enslavement to Freedom project, visit the Empire State Plaza Concourse in Albany and [learn more from the New York State Parks and Historic Sites website](#).



SAVE THE DATE

Governor Kathy Hochul presents the 25th

DR. KING

CAREER FAIR

April 10, 2025 | 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Empire State Plaza Convention Center

Additional Information to Follow

Check for updates at dol.ny.gov/dr-king-career-fair or email us at DrKingCareerFair@labor.ny.gov if you have questions.

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General Services**

The New York State Department of Labor is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program.
Auxiliary aides and services are available upon request and free of charge to individuals with disabilities
TTY/TDD 711 or 1-800-662-1220 (English) / 1-877-662-4886.

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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 Working Groups are set to form across all of 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 and with the DEIA team to implement the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion across the agency.

If you are interested in forming a Working Group in your division or office, email us at diversityandinclusion@dos.ny.gov!



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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 2024, [click here](#).

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

Onward and upward,

Kristopher Malone (he/him)



African American History Commission

Secretary Mosley represented the Commission at the OGS MLK Celebration on January 17! We also tabled to spread awareness about our work and initiatives.



We are excited to be tabling at the NYSABPRHAL Conference on February 14-15! To learn more about the Conference, visit their website: <https://nysabprlinc.org/conference/>

Asian American and Pacific Islander Commission

It was wonderful to see the AAPI Commission represented at DOS's Lunar New Year Celebration by Shawn Ma, the Director of Asian American Affairs at the Office of Governor Kathy Hochul. Shawn Ma was part of the team that created the Asian American and Pacific Islander Commission and has dedicated his career to uplifting Asian American communities in our state.

The second meeting of the AAPI Commission is being scheduled for March in Syracuse. Details will be announced closer to the meeting. Keep up to date with the Commission's latest news at our website: <https://dos.ny.gov/aapi-commission>

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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 the different ways we are furthering the mission of DEIA in our work as Team DOS.

Please reach out to me with any questions or comments. Happy Black History Month 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)



DOS OPDCI DEIJA-B Working Group Year in Review

On January 21, the OPDCI DEIJA-B Working Group shared a presentation during the All-Staff Meeting to reflect upon and celebrate the successes of 2024. These included the creation of 2 Community Resource Documents (one on defining DEIJA-B and the other on creating accessible public meetings), Community Climate Sessions, highlights in the Chamber's D&I Newsletter, 30 Learning Shares, the Cultural Awareness Series, the DEIJA-B Working Groups 2nd anniversary, and more!

Taking the time to celebrate these successes is both grounding and motivating as we continue this work. 2024 saw several groundbreaking moments for the DEIJA-B Working Group, and 2025 will be no different!

Black History Month Presentation

The Working Group also presented on the origins of Black History, highlighting the "Father of Black History," Dr. Carter G. Woodson who dedicated his life to celebrating Black history.

We also shared ways to show support during and beyond Black History Month:

- StoryGraph, a reading catalog website developed by Nadia Odunayo
- Black Girl Environmentalist, empowering Black girls, women, and non-binary individuals across the climate movement
- Guide to Black-Owned Businesses and Black-Led Organizations in Capital Region, with 200+ Capital Region Black-owned and led businesses and organizations
- Visiting the Underground Railroad Education Center in Albany!

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Thank you to everyone who attended DOS's Lunar New Year Learning Share on January 30!

This Virtual Gathering and Learning Share was a wonderful time to celebrate and learn more about this important holiday to different Asian cultures across New York State and around the world.



Happy Lunar New Year!

新年快乐

Chúc mừng năm mới

Selamat Tahun Baru Cina

Maligayang Bagong Taon sa iyo

새해 복 많이 받으세요

สวัสดีปีใหม่จีน

नयाँ वर्षको शुभकामना



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Welcome to the DOS DEIA Team's Recommended Reading Corner

The DEIA Team strives for curiosity and openness to learning while communicating a clear message: DEIA efforts are not about benefitting the few but **achieving equity for all**.

The 2025 Black History Month theme of **African Americans and Labor** highlights how labor and work contribute to the Black and African American experience. The DEIA team has recommended the following readings for those who wish to grow their knowledge and understanding of African American labor and Black history. Enjoy!

Fiction

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

Brown Girl, Brownstone by Paule Marshall

The Vanishing Half by Brit Bennett

The Street by Ann Petry

Roots: The Saga of an American Family by Alex Haley

Poetry and Articles

Black Feeling, Black Talk and ***Black Judgement*** by Nikki Giovanni

“Who Taught You to Hate Yourself? The Paradox of White America's Self-Sabotage” by Dr. Lessie Branch

The 2025 Black History Theme Executive Summary by the ASALH

Nonfiction

The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story edited by Nikole Hannah-Jones

Black Americans and Organized Labor: A New History by Paul D. Moreno

Reconsidering Southern Labor History: Race, Class, and Power by Matthew Hild

Rest is Resistance: A Manifesto by Tricia Hersey



The DOS DEIA Team Presents

RECOMMENDED READING CORNER

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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 give 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!



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”.

Regional Clusters across DOS offices are coming in 2025, and 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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Contact us!

Do you have any upcoming events that celebrate DEIA at DOS?

Want to contribute to the DEIA newsletter?

Contact Norie Wright (she/her) at
diversityandinclusion@dos.ny.gov
to let us know!



Please note March newsletter content deadline of March 10th

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