



2024

OFFICE OF EQUITY &
INCLUSION REPORT





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INTRODUCTION

The Department of Social Services' Office of Equity & Inclusion ("OEI") was established in December 2020. OEI is responsible for ensuring the agency's core values of equity, diversity, and inclusion ("EDI") are embedded throughout all aspects of the workforce, programs, and services by cultivating an inclusive climate and culture. We do this through outreach, engaging in cross divisional collaborations, programming, and learning & development opportunities. OEI provides leadership and guidance to address systemic inequities for all employees. We want to strengthen relationships so that employees can work more effectively and collaboratively to advance equity, inclusion, and anti-racism.

OEI TEAM

The Office of Equity & Inclusion is comprised of three areas:

1

EMPLOYEE PROGRAMS

Lead by Director Tracy Mack, provides oversight and guidance to the agency's Employee Resource and Heritage groups, as well as plans and coordinates agency events and initiatives such as:

- Blood Drives
- Excellence Program
- Commissioner Assignments
- ERG/Heritage Events
- Special Meetings and Retreats
- Trainings
- Lunch & Learns
- Toy Drives
- Workwell Health and Wellness Activities

2

RACIAL EQUITY INITIATIVES

Lead by Director Shaquiea Sykes works to ensure that the agency's commitment to providing dignified service delivery and fostering an inclusive work environment for all clients and employees regardless of their race and/or ethnicity is met by advancing racial equity within the agency. We do this by working collaboratively with DSS/HRA/DHS leadership to establish and endorse the racial equity agenda and measure the agency's success in achieving its goals and objectives.

3

GENDER EQUITY INITIATIVES

Lead by Director Gregory Williams works collaboratively with DSS/HRA/DHS leadership to establish and endorse the gender equity agenda and measure the agency's success in achieving its goals and objectives. We do this by ensuring all our services and programming are affirming for people regardless of their gender identity or expression and by ensuring that service delivery, reflects gender-informed practices, giving our staff the tools and support needed to work with people of all gender identities and expressions.

OVERALL GOAL

The overall goal of The Office of Equity & Inclusion is to build an environment that is diverse, inclusive, and values the differences we all bring to the table. **We achieve this by:**

- Improving awareness of EDI issues through the administration of an agency wide survey
- Promotion of diversity in the workplace through OEI workshops
- Collaboration with the Office of Human Resources Solutions ("HRS") to develop, recruit and retain talent from diverse backgrounds
- Development of metrics and analyzation of diversity objectives in collaboration with the DEI Council
- Identification of educational opportunities for all levels of staff

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

Over the course of 2024, The Office of Equity & Inclusion (OEI) hosted several workshops and trainings, supported agency ERGs and heritage groups, collaborated with several city agencies on DEI centric programming, produced historical events, and won a 2024 Anthem Award (Silver) within the awareness & media category (Podcast or Audio). The following is a listing of programming and resources provided by OEI:


EMPLOYEE PROGRAMS VOLUNTEERS AND PLANNER MEETING

In January, Employee Programs invited Committee Chairs, Event Planners and Volunteers to attend a Teams Meeting to ensure that the participants had current information from Finance, Legal Affairs, Research and Communications on hosting events for staff. Chairs of engaging and well-planned events shared their best practices and challenges.

MLK JR DAY CELEBRATION

The Office of Equity & Inclusion hosted a virtual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. program celebrating the life and societal contributions made by the civil rights leader. The online event featured a presentation on civil right events, a trivia game, and keynote addresses presented by Assembly member Steven Raga, representing District 30 & NY State Advisory Committee Member for the U.S. Federal Commission on Civil Rights. The program also included Steven McCoy, American entrepreneur, Journalist, Talk Show Host, Philanthropist, and Author. More than 60 people attended the online event.

VOLUNTEERS & PLANNERS MEETING 2024

 DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION OFFICE

STRATEGIC VOLUNTEERING
There are many ways to upskill and better yourself, but did you know that you can also gain many valuable job skills through volunteering? Becoming an agent for social change through volunteering allows you to positively impact workspaces while possibly accelerating your career. Strategic volunteering affords you an opportunity to learn more about what activities you enjoy, identify your strengths, build work connections, and gain important experiences.


COME TO OUR EVENT
DSS HRA DHS Employee Programs will host a Volunteer and Planners Meeting on January 10, 2024 at 4 WTC NY NY 10007 FROM 1PM - 4PM.

This event is an opportunity to bring **ALL** people together in and inspire collective action to create a more just and equitable agency.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Event Planning Seminars
- Workshops
- ERG & Heritage Committee Open Houses
- Networking Hour

TO GET INVOLVED AND RSVP
Email: EmployeePrograms@dss.nyc.gov



The NYC DSS HRA DHS Office of Equity & Inclusion Presents

MLK Jr. Day Celebration

"My History Doesn't Define My Future"

Join our team for this virtual program as we discuss how the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. impacted equality in America. In addition, listen to the stories of our guest speakers, NYS Assemblymember Steven Raga and Steven McCoy, The World's First Black Deaf Blind Journalist, as they share their personal journeys.


NYS Assemblymember Steven Raga


Journalist, Author Steven McCoy

 DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION OFFICE

JAN 12 • 2:00 PM TO 3:30 PM

RSVP ONLINE OR CONTACT EQUI@DSS.NYC.GOV

MARSHALL PLAN FOR MOMS TASK FORCE

The Office of Equity & Inclusion participated in a Marshall Plan for Moms Task Force meeting with the Commission on Gender Equity. Created by Local Law 99 of 2022, The Marshall Plan for Moms Task Force brings together a minimum of 17 leaders from City agencies and offices, advocates, and experienced community members to support New York City's working parents and caregivers. The Task Force will conduct research culminating in a report and recommendations on policies and issues. Currently, OEI participates in the "Government Supports, Payments and Services" subgroup.

THE GRIEA PROJECT PODCAST SEASON 2 EPISODE 4

The Office of Equity & Inclusion recorded and produced Episode 4 of The GRIEA Project podcast on the subject of "Triumph Through Struggle." The team interviewed Kenya Gipson, a media executive with iHeartMedia and wellness advocate, about the positive impact of governmental programs and her personal journey to becoming a media personality.



INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM SPEED MENTORSHIP (FRONTLINE)

In February, The Office of Equity & Inclusion hosted an Inclusive Leadership Development Program Speed Mentorship cohort for frontline staff members. The four-day program included DEI centric & career development workshops, one on one mentoring sessions, group mentoring sessions, and a networking event. Commissioner Park and several assistant commissioners participated in programming, providing invaluable insight into career pathways in city government. More than 30 people participated in the program.



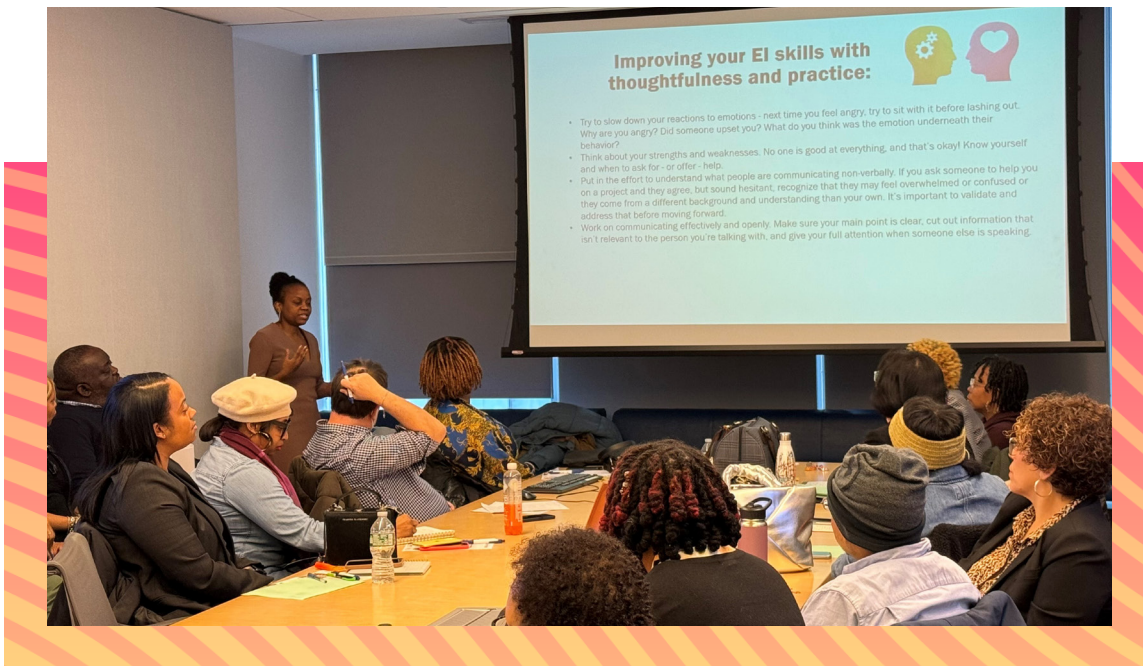
AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE-BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

The DSS-HRA-DHS African American Heritage Committee hosted their annual Black History Month celebration under the theme "African Americans and the Arts." The event featured performances by the vocalists and musicians of BDP Entertainment. Tracey Washington Bagley, an Emmy-award-winning TV producer currently at WABC Channel 7, gave the event's keynote address. Bagley is currently the executive producer of "Here & Now with Sandra Bookman", which focuses on stories of interest to the African American community. More than 230 people attended the event.



THE GRIEA PROJECT PODCAST SEASON 2 EPISODE 5

Episode 5 of The GRIEA Project podcast focused on the subject of "The Power of Persuasion." The team interviewed Mayte Carvalho, Author of "Persuasion - How to Use Rhetoric and Persuasive Communication in Your Personal and Professional Life," about presenting persuasive justifications at work, helping others to adopt Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) practices, and mastering the art of communication.



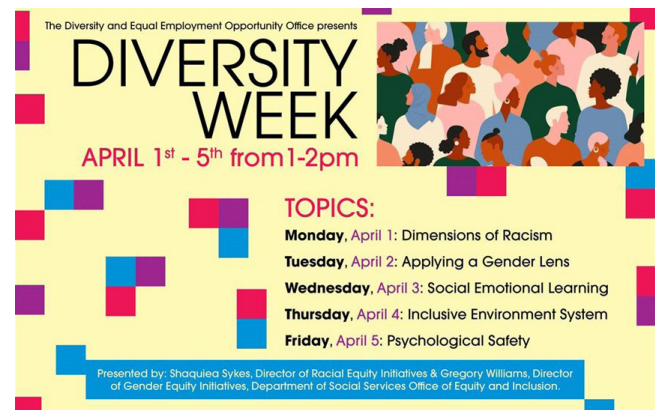
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

In March, The Office of Equity & Inclusion hosted a Women's History Month celebration that focused on the theme "Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion." The featured guest speakers for the event included Julissa Gutierrez, Chief Diversity Officer, Office of the Chief Diversity New York State, Erica Knox, Corporate Communications & Social Impact at BET, Patricia McLoughlin, General Manager of the The Anthem Awards, Charlotte Burney, Senior Programming Producer at TIME, Paden Sickles, CEO, SickFit Clothing, and Yulissa Delgado, CEO, Delarose Productions, and Aseanté Renee, Founder and Chief Wellness Officer at The Axon Group. More than 160 people attended the event.



HOUR OF POWER LEARNING SERIES

In April, The Office of Equity & Inclusion and City of New York Law Department Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity Office hosted a 5-day Diversity Week “Hour of Power” Lunch and Learn Workshop series for New York Law Department staff. Presentations included Dimensions of Racism, Applying a Gender Lens, Social Emotional Learning, Inclusive Environment Systems, and Psychological Safety. More than 200 participants attended the weeklong event.



THE GRIEA PROJECT PODCAST SEASON 2 EPISODE 6

Episode 6 of The GRIEA Project podcast focused on “Breaking Down Barriers.” The team interviewed Shanti Das, a former music industry executive & Founder of Silence the Shame, and Michele “Lady Byrd” McPhee, an executive director with Ladies of Hip-Hop, on the challenges of breaking down barriers within industries to foster equity, speaking up for others and yourself, and social-emotional needs.

CREATE EQUITABLE SPACES POSTER ROLL OUT

The Office of Equity & Inclusion in collaboration with the Office of Communications Management (OCM) rolled out the “Create Equitable Spaces” agency wide poster. The purpose of the poster is to increase visibility of The Office of Equity & Inclusion throughout the agency and drive conversations centered around inclusivity within the workplace.



EQUITABLE WORKSPACES?



EXCELLENCE AWARDS

In May, Employee Programs hosted an Excellence Awards program featuring a presentation of awards to including Lifetime Achievement Awards, Eagle Awards, Cross-Collaboration Awards, Helping Hands Awards, and an Impact Award. Commissioner Molly Park provided opening remarks for the event as the ceremony honored employees who exemplified the Excellence values of Service, Respect, Transparency, and Accountability. More than 180 people attended the event.



PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY/IMPOSTER SYNDROME WORKSHOP

The Office of Equity & Inclusion hosted a virtual workshop on Psychological Safety and Imposter Syndrome. The workshop provided insight into psychological safety and its importance within the workplace. The team also discussed how imposter syndrome can lead to increased risks of depression, anxiety, and burnout. The team shared resources with attendees at the end of the online event. More than 100 people attended the online event.

THE GRIEA PROJECT PODCAST SEASON 2 EPISODE 7

Episode 7 of The GRIEA Project podcast focused on the subject of "Imposter Syndrome." The team interviewed Morgan Bass Roper, a Belonging & Inclusion professional, on the impact of self-authenticity within the workplace, the rise of imposter syndrome, and tips on creating equitable spaces.

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION

The Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Committee with the support from The Office of Equity & Inclusion hosted their annual AAPI Heritage Celebration under the theme "Advancing Leader Through Innovation." The event featured performances by Cebuanos Engaging in Building Unity (CEBU) Inc., Yingna (Inna) Lu from the Chinese Music Ensemble, Tenzin Dolker, Shilpa Jhurani from RS International NY, The Chen Sisters Dance Troupe, and others. After the performances, a panel on "Leadership & Innovation" was held and included Irfan Ahmed, HRA Chief of Staff, Celia Au, actor & producer, and Sathish Nngaiah, DSS Chief Security Information Officer. Commissioner Molly Park provided closing remarks for the event. More than 165 people attended the event.

QUEENS PRIDE PARADE

In June, Employee Programs and the Rainbow Committee coordinated staff participation in the Queens Pride Parade on Sunday, June 2, 2024.

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

The DSS-HRA-DHS African American Heritage Committee with support from Employee Programs hosted its annual Juneteenth Celebration under the theme "All American Freedom Day: Renewing Passion for Freedom and Democracy." The event included a keynote address from Norka Blackman-Richards, Senior Director of the Percy Ellis Sutton SEEK Program at Queens College, City University of New York, and musical performances by Vocalist Tiona Hall and Saxophonist Soils Tshepo Puoane. A portion of a PBS Juneteenth documentary titled "Faith and Freedom" was screened during the event and the event culminated in a trivia contest hosted by AAHC Chair Prince R. Lewis and AAHC Treasurer Tyra S. Branch.



CARIBBEAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION

The DSS-HRA-DHS the Caribbean American Heritage Committee with support from Employee Programs hosted its annual Caribbean American Heritage Month Celebration under the theme “Celebrating Caribbean Contributions to American History, Culture and Life.” The event included a keynote address from Dr. Evelyn Castro, Senior Advisor to the President for Community Engagement and Dean of the School of Professional and Community Development at Medgar Evers College (CUNY), and remarks from Dr. Ken G. Irish-Bramble, Director of the Caribbean Research Center at Medgar Evers College. The event also included performances by Guyanese percussionist and poet Winston Hoppie and the Jammers Steel. More than 175 people attended the event.



LGIBTQI+ PRIDE MONTH CELEBRATION

The Office of Equity & Inclusion and Rainbow Committee hosted a virtual LGBTQI+ Pride Month Celebration highlighting the life of Bayard Rustin, an openly gay civil rights activist. A portion of “Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin,” was shown and a presentation was given to the group on practicing allyship, sharing of personal pronouns, and LGBTQIA+ community history. More than 70 people attended the online event.

Listen to our podcast by scanning the QR code!



The Office of Equity & Inclusion Presents

PRIDE Month

Virtual Workshop & Documentary Screening

Join our team for a virtual workshop and screening of “Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin” in celebration of PRIDE Month





JUNE 28, 2024
2:00 PM TO 3:30 PM

RSVP ONLINE OR REGISTER AT
EQUITY@DSS.NYC.GOV

UNEQUAL GROUND WORKSHOP AND REPORT RELEASE

In July, The Office of Equity & Inclusion attended a Women Creating Change workshop. The workshop's theme was "Unequal Ground – Advancing Economic and Civic Equity in New York's Workforce" and a report economic barriers report was shared. In collaboration with The New School Center for New York City Affairs, the report highlighted the structural barriers contributing to ongoing gender pay disparities across the city. The event featured several speakers including, Carmen De La Rosa, a New York City Council Member, Senator Jessica Ramos, Chair of the Committee on Labor, New York State Senate, Dr. Michelle Holder, Associate Professor of Economics at John Jay College, and Jeanna M. Victor, Executive Director, NYC Equal Employment Practices Commission.



WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY CELEBRATION

In August, The Office of Equity & Inclusion hosted the first ever Women's Equality Day Celebration that focused on the theme "L.E.A.R.N For Tomorrow." The event featured opening remarks by Commissioner Molly Park and guest speakers included Executive Director Nathifa Forde from NYC Her Future, Sophia Chang, Author and founder of Unlock Her Potential, Kenya Gipson, an iHeart Radio/Podcast Personality, and Commissioner James Hendon, NYC Department of Veterans Services. During the event, two workshop presentations were provided by Adana Wright, Deputy Executive Director for Strategic Learning and Capacity Building, Commission on Gender Equity, and Michael Matos, CEO of Personal Protective Concepts. The event culminated in a live recording session of The GRIEA Project podcast which featured Arlene Tam, Universal Music Group. More than 160 people attended the event.



THE GRIEA PROJECT PODCAST SEASON 2 EPISODE 9

Episode 9 of The GRIEA Project podcast focused on the subject of "Building One's Network." The team interviewed Arlene Tam, a senior director of people strategy, insights & planning with Universal Music Group, on building one's network and finding the power in people. During this episode, the group discusses how important employee resource groups can be within an organization and tips individuals can use to grow their circle.

THE GRIEA PROJECT PODCAST SEASON 3 EPISODE 1

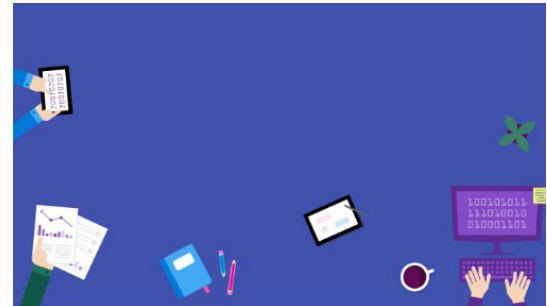
The GRIEA Project podcast entered its third season with an episode on the subject of "Inclusivity Through Imagery & Dialogue." The team attended Anime NYC 2024 and interviewed Hilton George, creator and CEO of Blerdcon, Vandel Marchen, manga and comic artist, and Erik Cunningham, CEO of For Urban Nerd Kulture (F.U.N.K), on the responsibility of creating inclusiveness through media and art, the impact of representation, and challenging traditional stereotypes.

INCLUSIVE JOB DESCRIPTION TRAINING

In September, The Office of Equity & Inclusion and NYC Health hosted a workshop on Inclusive Job Description Writing. The goal of the workshop was to assist human resource professionals utilize non-biased job description language and clear requirements within job announcements. Inclusive job description training assists individuals in becoming better communicators and works to mitigate biases including racism, tokenism, ableism, ageism, and sexism. More than 100 participants attended the online workshop.

PREFERRED NAME USAGE 101

The Office of Equity & Inclusion provided an informational flyer on preferred name usage 101 practices for staff within HR Customer Care Solutions. The info sheet provides practices on common errors, usage of preferred names, and resources.



The Art of Writing Inclusive Job Descriptions

Hybrid Diversity Recruitment Training: In-person
@ Gotham/Conference Room 3-32 on the Third
Floor or remotely via Microsoft Teams.

[Start now](#)

DOMESTIC AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE WORKPLACE LIAISON BREAKFAST

In October, The Office of Equity & Inclusion attended a Domestic and Gender-Based Violence Workplace Liaison Breakfast, hosted by the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence. During the event, Elizabeth Saylor, Citywide Director of the Employment Law Unit at the Legal Aid Society, led a presentation on Executive Order 85 related laws and resources. Participants were given the opportunity to engage in an overview of how to help implement NYC DV/GBV workplace policies.

SPEED MENTORSHIP VIDEO RELEASE

The Office of Equity & Inclusion and the Office of Communications Management (OCM) collaborated to release an online video highlighting the Inclusive Leadership Development Program (Speed Mentorship). The video will be used as a marketing tool to recruit participants for future sessions.

NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY

The Office of Equity & Inclusion and Rainbow Committee hosted a virtual National Coming Out Day Celebration under the theme "Learning About Others." OEI provided a "History of National Coming Out Day" presentation and workshop on "The impact of inclusivity in the workplace." The guest speaker for the online event was Ronald Porcelli, Director of NYC Unity Project. More than 50 people attended the event.

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST ON BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH

The Office of Equity & Inclusion attended a "Saving Lives, Shaping Policy: A Legislative Breakfast on Black Maternal Health" event, which was held at the NYU Helen & Martin Kimmel Center for University Life. During the event, State and local elected officials and policymakers joined practitioners, advocates, and researchers in several round-table discussions on the state of Black maternal health in New York. Speakers included, NYS Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senate Majority Leader, NYC Council Member Adrienne E. Adams, Speaker, New York City Council, Assembly Member Michaelle C. Solages, Deputy Majority Leader, NYS Assembly, Sideya Sherman, New York City Chief Equity Officer, Commissioner, NYC Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice, and many others.



The poster is for the National Coming Out Day 2024 Virtual Program & Documentary Screening. It features the DSS LGB TOI logo and the Office of Equity & Inclusion logo. The text reads: "Presents National Coming Out Day 2024 Virtual Program & Documentary Screening". It invites people to join a virtual program and screening of "Worst Thing About Coming Out: stories of identity oppression" in observance of National Coming Out Day. The guest speaker is Ronald Porcelli, Director of NYC Unity Project. The event is on OCT 9 from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM VIRTUAL. Contact information is provided: RSVP ONLINE OR CONTACT EQUITY@DSS.NYC.GOV.



THE GRIEA PROJECT PODCAST SEASON 3 EPISODE 2

Episode 2 of The GRIEA Project podcast focused on the subject of “Organizational Success Through Mentorship.” The team attended Ad Week NYC x The Female Quotient and interviewed Ashley-Lauren Elrod, Founder and CEO of Visionary Woman Productions, on ways organizations can utilize mentorship to enhance team operability. During this episode, the group discussed how leaders can empower their staff, chart paths for employees to grow professionally, and provided tips on maximizing cross-generational interactions.

BLACK WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP SERIES

The Office of Equity & Inclusion in collaboration with NYC Parks Department, The Administration for Children’s Services (ACS), The Department of Environmental Protection, and NYC Public Schools, hosted a Black Women in Leadership Series under the theme, “Leading in White Dominant Spaces, Feeling Invisible, & Burnout.” Panelist for the event included Kassandra Pierre Bedell, VP Global Payments Operations, JP Morgan Chase, Maya Williams, Director of Research and Policy, NYC Commission on Racial Equity, Ashley Ross-Teal, Chief Content Officer for the NYC Mayor’s Office of Equity & Racial Justice (MOERJ), and the moderator was Dr. Jacqueline Martin, Senior Advisor, Office of the First Deputy Commissioner, Administration for Children’s Services. More than 150 people attended the online event.

LATINO HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION

The DSS-HRA-DHS the Latino Heritage Committee with support from Employee Programs hosted its annual Latino Heritage Month Celebration under the theme “Pioneers of Change – Shaping the Future Together” at the David N. Dinkins Municipal Building. DSS Commissioner Molly Park welcomed attendees and the event included guest speakers to include Manuel Castro, Commissioner of the NYC Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, NYC Public Schools Chancellor Melissa Aviles-Ramos, Yexenia Markland, Chief Change Officer, Mayor’s Office of Contracts, and many others. Carlos Acosta, a member of the Employee Program’s team was presented with an award for his contributions to the committee. The committee awarded scholastic scholarships to two NYC based students. The event also included musical performances by the group Son Borincano, and a luncheon buffet of traditional food from Latin America. More than 180 people attended the event.



INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM SPEED MENTORSHIP

During late October and mid-November, The Office of Equity & Inclusion hosted an Inclusive Leadership Development Program Speed Mentorship cohort for staff members. The four-day program included DEI centric & career development workshops, one on one mentoring sessions, group mentoring sessions, and a networking event. Commissioner Park and several Assistant Commissioners participated in programming, providing invaluable insight into career pathways in city government. More than 25 people completed the program.

DIVERSITY THURSDAY SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

The Office of Equity & Inclusion and the Office of Communications Management (OCM) collaborated on producing an online campaign focused on creating accepted and protected work environments for all agency personnel. The first ever #DiversityThursday social media post was published across all agency social media platforms. Every third Thursday of each month, the agency will post diversity, equity, and inclusion centric messages to foster inclusion throughout its locations.

2ND ANNUAL NATIONAL VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES CELEBRATION

The Office of Equity & Inclusion hosted the 2nd Annual National Veterans and Military Families Celebration. The event included a Color Guard performance by the U.S. Army NYC Recruiting Battalion and opening remarks by Commissioner Molly Park. Guest speakers included NYC Veterans Day Parade Grand Marshal Master Gunnery Sgt. John Escalante (USMC, Retired), Commissioner James Hendon, New York City Department of Veterans Services, Lt. Col. John Rhodes, Commander of the U.S. Army NYC Recruiting Battalion, Samuel Cottes, Bronx VA Medical Center, Richard Comitz, American Corporate Partnership, Brenda Archer, National Association of Black Military Women, and many others. More than 160 people attended the event.



BLACK WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP SERIES

The Office of Equity & Inclusion in collaboration with the NYC Parks Department, The Administration for Children's Services (ACS), The Department of Environmental Protection, and NYC Public Schools, hosted a Black Women in Leadership Series under the theme, "Empowerment and Equity: Upholding Credibility and Addressing Pay Disparity as Black Women." Panelists for the event included, Magalie D. Austin, Esq., Executive Deputy Commissioner, Department of Design and Construction, Patricia Ramsey, Ph. D. President, Medgar Evers College-CUNY, Adana Wright, Deputy Executive Director Strategic Learning and Capacity Building, NYC Commission on Gender Equity. More than 100 participants attended the online event. More than 120 people attended the online event.

INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

The Office of Equity & Inclusion hosted the agency's first ever International Men's Day Celebration under the theme "Improving Everyday as A Role Model." Commissioner Molly Park provided opening remarks for the event and keynote speakers included Commissioner Louis Molina, Department of Citywide Administrative Services, Guy Brown, Author, Meteorologist, NY1/Spectrum, J. Martin Alexander, Author, Co-CEO/FUBU Clothing, Chimere Stephens, Senior Dir of Recruitment, NYC Public Schools, Christian Peralta, Personal Trainer, Disc Jockey, James Stratford, Chief Strategy Officer, FAN4Kids, and many others. More than 140 people attended the event.



CULTURALLY COMPETENCY TRAINING

The Office of Equity & Inclusion created an eLearning training, "Become a Culturally Competent Leader," which is available via the Absorb platform. This training equips managers with the necessary skills and knowledge to lead in diverse and inclusive workplaces. The training provides valuable insights into cultural competency, effective communication across cultures, and best practices for fostering inclusive environments. More than 60% of the agency's managerial workforce have completed the online course.

INCLUSIVE JOB DESCRIPTION TRAINING

In December, The Office of Equity & Inclusion and NYC Health hosted a second workshop on Inclusive Job Description Writing to assist human resource professionals utilize non-biased job description language and clear requirements within job announcements. More than 590 NYC Health employees attended the online event.

BLACK WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP SERIES

The Office of Equity & Inclusion in collaboration with the NYC Parks Department, The Administration for Children's Services (ACS), The Department of Environmental Protection, and NYC Public Schools, hosted a Black Women in Leadership Series under the theme, "Microaggressions, Unconscious Bias, and Being an Ally to Black Women." The moderator was Winette Saunders, First Deputy Commissioner for the Administration for Children Services. Panelists included Karen St. Hilaire, DSS Chief of Staff and Chief of Diversity, Dawne Mitchell, Chief Attorney for Juvenile Rights Practice, The Legal Aid Society, and Adriene Holder, Chief Attorney of Civil Practice, The Legal Aid Society.

ONGOING OEI INITIATIVES

Equity & Inclusion Interagency Collaborative

A grassroots workgroup of DEI leaders and partners in city agencies that understand the importance of building on existing foundational groundwork to set the stage for addressing key disparities and improving outcomes in NYC communities. By building on the work already underway, the Workgroup will contribute to strategic planning and promote a culture of learning and collaboration. This, in turn, provides opportunities to better understand community needs, develop comprehensive solutions, leverage expertise/professional learning, and harness high-impact DEI initiatives citywide. In summary, the Workgroup is prepared to amplify DEI best practices across city agencies, deepen support, and expand capacity-building on a citywide level by focusing on specific goals.

Diversity Recruitment Guide

The goal of the Diversity Recruitment Guide is to provide resources to create a more diverse workforce, address underutilization, create an agency-wide recruitment plan, review hiring, and separation data to identify gaps in the workforce, and implement practices in all stages of the recruitment process.

Racial Equity Toolkit

The toolkit was created to increase a shared understanding of racial equity and inclusion, to help us clearly define the terms we use in conversations. It is also important to be aware of how and why dimensions become racist and ways we can create change. The racial equity toolkit is a resource list and reference tool that provides research, definitions, ideas, and guidance for employees who want to increase their understanding of racial equity, systems, communities, and culture at a large.

Gender Equity Toolkit

The Gender Equity Toolkit is designed to assist individuals in helping our agency reach its goal of creating gender-equitable workspaces throughout New York City. The toolkit is composed of four parts and includes gender equity strategies, application of a gender lens, utilization of a gender assessment scale, spotlighting the workforce pay gap, and adoptable practices that embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion for people of all ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, religions, abilities, etc. Portions of the toolkit are in collaboration with the NYC Commission on Gender Equity.

Blind Resume Selection Pilot

The goal of blind resume reviews is to reduce both conscious and unconscious hiring bias. These biases most often affect women, non-white applicants, and older applicants. By hiding characteristics like age, gender, ethnicity, or level of education, you can help eliminate some of the cognitive biases that can show up when reviewing resumes. Blind resume reviews help us remove some of the preconceived notions that we may have about candidates based on their name, academic and social affiliations, the year they graduated, etc. allowing us to focus on the applicant's qualifications and skills.

Diversity Equity & Inclusion STAR Award

The Office of Equity & Inclusion feels it important to recognize and celebrate staff who not only work tirelessly to serve New Yorkers but impact their workplace in a Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) centric manner. THE Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion STAR award is a way for colleagues, supervisors, and managers to nominate staff who embody the agency's core diversity, equity, and inclusion values. The DEI STAR award is awarded to one staff member during the Excellence Award program.

Blood Drives

Employee Programs coordinates agency Blood Drives every 56 days at specific locations within the five boroughs and monitors opportunities for staff to attend other Blood Drives near their work or home location. This initiative is an integral part of the Department of Citywide Administrative Services allowing staff to have the convenience of donating near their work or home. DSS has consistently been the largest donor pool behind the uniformed services.

#DiversityThursday Social Media Campaign

The Office of Equity & Inclusion and Office of Communications Management (OCM) collaborate on producing an online campaign aimed at creating work environments where all employees feel accepted and protected. Every third Thursday of each month, the agency posts Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion centric messages on all agency social media platforms to foster inclusion, combat marginalization, and inform staff of workplace best practices.

The GRIEA Project Podcast

The Office of Equity & Inclusion produces The GRIEA Project, an award-winning podcast, series, which centers on celebrating diversity by capturing raw discussions about key diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) topics. This 2024 Anthem Award-winning series spotlights cutting-edge DEI practices and broadens listeners' perspectives on current DEI issues to create equitable workspaces inside and outside of the agency.

Excellence Program

Employee Programs oversees this agency-wide program, which allows opportunities to honor staff and managers who exemplify the Excellence values of Service, Respect, Transparency, and Accountability. Through the coordination of "road shows" throughout different agency locations and promotion of E-Card usage, this program will help develop new opportunities to gather input from the internal stakeholders.

Workplace Influencer Program

The Office of Equity & Inclusion recognizes the need to mobilize those who influence others within the workplace. A Workplace influencer is an individual within an organization who positively impacts the way external or internal audiences view, interact, or form opinions about an organization's brand, product, or services. This program mobilizes staff who are dedicated to creating equitable workspaces and helps Employee Programs assist different employee resource groups and DEI STAR award candidates.

Inclusive Leadership Development Program Speed Mentorship

The Office of Equity & Inclusion Inclusive Leadership Development Program Speed Mentorship helps connect individuals to mentors who can provide different perspectives on success in the professional arena. The four-day program includes Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion centric & career development workshops, one on one mentoring sessions, group mentoring sessions, and multiple networking opportunities. Through knowledge sharing, networking, and interaction with senior leaders, mentees can build meaningful relationships to better meet agency succession planning needs.

Equity & Inclusion Challenges

The Equity & Inclusion challenges are ongoing and are created to help staff work on building effective habits and an awareness around equity and inclusion.

Toastmasters Outreach

Toastmasters International develops member's leadership skills. By using Zoom to host bi-weekly meetings, Employee Programs plans to encourage more participation from staff in all five boroughs to use the Pathways tools to develop leaders and speakers throughout the agency.

The Diversity, Equality, & Inclusion Scorecard

As DSS-HRA-DHS continues to create equitable workspaces, the Office of Equity & Inclusion captures data and “DEI centric” key performance indicators (KPIs) for each program area within the agency. The scorecard introduces an annual scoring mechanism to explore utilization of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) best practices within different program areas. The scorecard is a tool to assist in compiling DEI departmental recommendations, identify strategies to address inequities, and help in succession planning.

New Employee Orientation

The Office of Equity & Inclusion and Employee Programs works with Communications, Finance, Legal Affairs, and Conflict of Interest representatives to offer information about DEI centric programs available to staff at every New Hire Orientation.

A LOOK AHEAD

Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration

In January 2025, The Office of Equity & Inclusion will host a virtual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration event. The event will focus on celebrating the accomplishments of MLK Jr and the impact his work has left on the DEIB space.

Winter Diversity Book Club

In February 2025, The Office of Equity & Inclusion in collaboration with the McMILLAN Library/ Office of Research & Policy Innovation will do its second diversity book club launch. The purpose of the book club is to create community across agency program areas which will create a culture of comfort, teamwork and camaraderie. The book club will give employees the opportunity to step up and practice leadership roles such as leading a group discussion or presenting an overview of a chapter. This book club will help our agency become a learning organization in which people continuously grow and develop.

Recruitment Expo

In February, Employee Programs will host a Recruitment Expo that will be open to all staff at HRA-DSS-DHS. This expo will feature representatives from all our Heritage Committees and Employee Resource Groups to discuss the group's mission, expectations, and goals for new and existing members. The expo will mimic the structure of a job fair which will recruit new members for the committees or groups that are present.

International Women's Day Celebration

In March 2025, The Office of Equity & Inclusion and Employee Programs will host an International Women's Day Celebration that will focus on the creation of equity for women in the workplace.

Black Women in Leadership Series

In March 2025, The Office of Equity & Inclusion in collaboration with NYC Parks Department, The Administration for Children's Services (ACS), The Department of Environmental Protection, and NYC Public Schools, will host another Black Women in Leadership Series.

Women's History Month Celebration

In March 2025, The Office of Equity & Inclusion and Employee Programs will host a Women's History Month Celebration that will focus on the creation of equity for women in the workplace.

Inclusive Leadership Development Program Speed Mentorship

In April 2025, The Office of Equity & Inclusion will host an Inclusive Leadership Development Program Speed Mentorship cohort for staff members. The four-day program will include DEI centric & career development workshops, one on one mentoring sessions, group mentoring sessions, and a networking event.

Excellence Awards

In May 2025, Employee Programs will host an Excellence Awards program featuring a presentation of awards to include Lifetime Achievement Awards, Eagle Awards, Cross-Collaboration Awards, Helping Hands Awards, and an Impact Award.

Office of Access, Compliance, and Engagement

Throughout 2025, the Office of Equity & Inclusion, along with Employee Programs, and the Equal Employment Opportunities Office will work to identify strategies and develop initiatives that align with the agency's Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) & Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) goals. To enhance strengthen outreach, programming, and learning & development opportunities across each department, as well as strengthen and cross divisional collaborations, a restructuring process may need be necessary.

To meet the future needs of the agency, these offices will transition into the Office of Access, Compliance, and Engagement. This new department will establish the necessary infrastructure to ensure both internal and external stakeholders have a voice in to in agency work environments. In addition, the department will conduct ongoing compliance reviews, compile relevant reports, develop materials and trainings, and implement engagement strategies aimed at promoting racial and economic justice among both internal and external parties.

Challenges and Opportunities

The ability to host in person events is appreciated; however, it presents challenges for staff attendance due to high number of vacancies within agency and specific departments. The Office of Equity & Inclusion and Employee Programs provides the option to host Zoom and Team meetings for staff, which is a welcome addition for employees located outside of 4 WTC. Additionally, The Office of Equity & Inclusion and Employee Programs collaborates with coordinators in other locations to bring activities and events to their respective locations. This way, staff can stop by to learn about available programs, participate in stress breaks, and discover ways to engage with their colleagues.



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The Office of Equity & Inclusion team has laid a solid foundation for thousands of our employees including hosting DEI workshops, support of our agency's DEI Council, support for more our 12 ERGs, administration of an EIB survey, and composition of racial and gender equity toolkits. In addition, Hundreds of new hires have attended our office presentations and know our agency's DEI goals from day one. As our office stays committed to supporting our employees, The Office of Equity & Inclusion and Employee Programs pledges to find ways to impact our agency in a positive manner increasing equity throughout New York City.