

Women's History Month

March 10, 2023

Celebrating Women's Achievements in Leading Social Change

Celebrate good times, come on! There's a party going on right here. A celebration to last throughout the year." Kool and the Gang, *Celebration*

Its Women's History Month and Wednesday was International Women's Day. There is little that I enjoy more than acknowledging and thanking the great people who power our engines in the fight for racial justice.

As you may know, the Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative was established in 2015. Michelle Alexander's book, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, kicked off a



wave of civic engagement to fight social injustices described in her seminal work.

The DRJC was born out of the energy of community organizers using that frame. In its early days, our small-but-mighty collection of civic leaders and volunteers kept a laser-like focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion in state government employment.

Cynthia Primo Martin, Ruth Sokolowski, Michelle Basham, and Dr. Michelle Taylor were among the founding members of the DRJC. Then, we were pushing state government to adopt the transformative recommendations of the <u>Ivy Planning Group</u> (lead in part by Janet Crenshaw Smith).

Following George Floyd's 2020 death and subsequent protest movement, Delawareans in shock and anguish mobilized to join the fight for racial justice. That movement was a strong demonstration of our willingness to reckon with systemic and institutional racism. And the groundswell of new members led Michelle Taylor and the United Way of Delaware to fully embrace the DRJC, where we have been officially powered since then.

Today, the DRJC comprises more than 200 individual and organizational members. Our work is organized around these impact areas:

- Health equity led by Erin Ridout, Kim Blanch and Dr. Brittany Hazzard
- Wealth creation led by Shelly Cecchett and Bernice Edwards
- Public policy led by Yvette Santiago and Anne Farley
- Education led in part by Dr. Sandi Hagans-Morris and Fatimah Conley Stone
- Criminal justice led by Renata Kowalczyk, Lynne Kielhorn, Tanya Whittle
- Youth advancement led by Jalyn Powell and Cierra Hall-Hipkins
- Performance measurers led in part by Dr. Kathy Denhardt

• Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) led by Taryn Guy, and Debbie Smith

These women combine their power, passion and skills with those of **Alex Southerst**, **Tierra Fair**, **Dr. Gwen Angalet**, **and Dr. Vonna Drayton** to boldly drive change. And there are still more. **Jamee Boone** leads Fusion Alliance. **Donna Snyder White** heads our minority small business initiative. **Emily Kauffman** leads Equity Counts Data Center.

That's a lot of women powering change from the grassroots to the grasstops. Thank you all! It is my pleasure privilege and honor to witness your greatness as we shift our paradigm to embrace equity.

There is much more work to be done. My challenge to you all is to join or remain active in this fight with us and to find ways to celebrate the great women in your lives.

Warmest regards, *Raina*

Raina Allen, Director, Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative

EDITOR'S NOTE: We salute you for your leadership and commitment, as well, Raina.

Thank You for Doing More!

Thank you to some 15,000 donors who gave more than \$2,381,000 to Delaware nonprofits through this year's Do More 24 Delaware!



DRJC: Who We Are and What We Do

The Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative (DRJC) provides a platform for

communities throughout Delaware to dissect and redress institutional policies and procedures related to racial justice.

DRJC members have been engaged in this fight since 2015. On the heels of the national racial reckoning and Black Lives Matter movement, the DRJC received requests from hundreds of new volunteers to join. People from across the state wanted to actively engage in the fight against racism in Delaware. The groundswell of new members led the United Way of Delaware to fully embrace the DRJC. Since 2020, DRJC has been powered by the United Way of Delaware, providing administrative support to expand capacity.

Today, the DRJC comprises more than 200 individuals and organizations working in committees to uncover, repeal, and restructure policies and practices that negatively impact people of color. The work is organized around seven impact areas: health equity, wealth creation, public policy, education, criminal justice, youth advancement, and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI). We function in work groups where "agents of change" from the grassroots to the grass tops join forces and work together to drive change. The DRJC also hosts events, community conversations and other meetings.

We need you, your involvement and passion, to power up the fight! Please reach out to Alex **<u>asoutherst@uwde.org</u>** for the meeting invitations to committees, workgroups and general body meetings and to be added to our email list.

Summit Positions Students to Affect Change

More than 350 persons, including Delaware Secretary of Education Dr. Mark Holodick, 17 school superintendents and more than 200 students from all across Delaware have signed up to attend the second annual Black Student Summit at St. Georges High School on March 18.

The Summit provides a unique opportunity for students to share ideas and initiatives to affect change within their school districts and cross-pollinate with districts from all across the state. Students will have direct access to people in leadership positions in education who are attending the Summit to inform and inspire the students, as well as to listen and learn from them.

The Black Student Summit is by and for students who want to drive change through the power of Black Student Unions/Associations in Delaware. The summit aims to prepare, train, and refuel students with the skills and tools to succeed academically, professionally and personally.

It is also a means for the adults that support and advocate for the students to lend their experience and wisdom and to work collectively with students to make the changes required for a fully equitable educational experience.

The student-led event this year celebrates the theme "Uplifting Black Student Voices." The keynote speaker, Wilmingtonian Ashley Christopher, is the founder of the HBCU Week Foundation and the week-long HBCU educational event and celebration.

The student planning committee worked to ensure that each participant has a rewarding and inspiring experience. The students want to use this opportunity to uplift and empower students holistically and to equip students with the skills needed to be current and future leaders in their schools and beyond. Highlights of the day include:

- Mental health workshops tailored separately to males and females will address challenges men and women of color face and will encourage students to become more aware about mental health.
- A student panel around House Bill 198 will be a candid discussion between current students and two of the students who helped draft the bill. This panel will share insight and experience with a call to action to help students work with those people in their districts crafting the implementation of Black History

curricula.

• The Black Student Union from the University of Delaware will provide students with tools and resources on how to start and run a Black Student Union.

The DRJC is proud to present this unique opportunity for open and frank discussion among students, administrators and all who have a vision for a school system that equitably supports all students regardless of race or zip code of residence.

It is through interactions such as this Summit that all stakeholders can come together to hear each other, to collectively think about how to transform the system, and to set a common agenda for change. We thank all of the students, administrators, teachers, parents and other adults who set aside time attend to learn and grow on a Saturday morning for their commitment to a better future for all Delawareans.



PROFILE: Appoquinimink High School's Black Student Union

Celebrating the students and their dedicated advisors and wishing them great success in their work to dismantle systemic racism in Delaware and beyond.

Year established: 2018

Advisors' names: Diahann Johnson and Jamal Barnes

Number of years serving as Advisor: Diahann Johnson 5 yrs. Jamal Barnes 1yr.



BSU officers: Aaliyah Hilton, Naa Sowah, Jahairah Thomas and Laila Jean-Paul

Number of BSU members: 46 students

Meeting frequency: bi-weekly, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month

Q: Ms. Johnson, Why did you become an advisor?

A: I was recruited in my first week of officially joining the faculty by three students. I immediately said yes. I have been so honored to work with such a group of aspirational, committed and engaged students.

Q: What has been a highlight of serving as a BSU advisor?

A. I am reinspired by the students every meeting. Watching young leaders develop and find their voice is my 'why'? I want to be on the forefront of issues impacting students of color surrounding issues of diversity and inclusion, always moving forward, pressing for change and positive outcomes.

Q: What would you like to share with others in the community about students in your BSU?

A: Look for them to become change agents in their communities and beyond. They will become future leaders in every arena, artistic, social, political and economic.

DRJC's RealTalk: Probation Reform

In partnership with the Delaware Center for Justice (DCJ) and ACLU of Delaware, DRJC hosted a *RealTalk* community conversation to discuss the impact of probation on individuals, families, and communities as well as Sen. Marie



Pinkney's newly introduced probation reform bill, Senate Bill 4.

The hour-and-one-half virtual event on March 2 featured a panel of Haneef Salaam, Campaign for Smart Justice Manager, ACLU DE, Kailyn Richards, Director of Policy, DCJ, and Sen. Marie Pinkney. It was moderated by DRJC's Manager of Public Policy & Engagement, Alex Southerst.

Sen. Pinkney set the stage with a deep dive into SB 4 and an exploration of how the bill codifies practices that were successfully adopted by many probation officers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The resounding theme of the bill is a more holistic approach to probation and the goal of moving toward a probation system that considers the needs of the individual.

Attendees then heard powerful anecdotes and stories from and about impacted individuals facing barriers to employment, education, and financial growth due to limitations in our current system. Haneef's personal experience provided eye-opening insight into an often cyclical system with an unclear path to "true freedom."

DRJC is a proud supporter of SB 4 and we encourage you to <u>send a letter</u> to your legislators expressing your support for the bill.

Working Together for the Implementation of HB 198

On Wed March 1, over 60 people virtually joined the Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative (DRJC), *Let the Truth Be Told*, *Our History Matters* and *Black History Ed Zone* to discuss the implementation of HB 198.

This was the second state-wide community meeting designed to help build bridges between the community and the HB 198-school infrastructure, to ask questions about Black history content and offer recommendations to expand and enhance the ways in which is Black history taught to Delaware's children. Among those on the call were Dr. Monica Gant, Associate Secretary, DE Dept of Education; school district and charter school personnel; HB 198 school leads and social studies coordinators.

Dr. Mike Feldman, DDOE's HB 198 lead, walked the audience through the 901-page "Black History Education" report. This annual report, required by HB 198, includes each public and charter school's response form detailing their progress on incorporating Black history and the Black experience into their schools' curricula.

The meeting gave community members the opportunity to come together to learn about the implementation process and to collaborate on ways to create curricula that are complete and consistent across all districts in the state.

It was also an opportunity to support those who are creating this new way of thinking and teaching. We know there currently is no instruction manual for this work and limited time and resources to work with. We applaud the teachers, administrators and community members for their efforts and commitment to their students and the community.

We also applaud *Let The Truth Be Told*, under the direction of Dr. Marlene Saunders, who is leading the charge to ensure that HB 198 is implemented properly to correct the substantial absence of African American presence in Delaware and American history. DRJC will continue to stand beside you on this important work.

We invite everyone who wishes to have their ideas heard to join us at future meetings on this topic. Please email Alex at asoutherst@uwde.org to be added to our team.



We are at a crossroads. We are not done. While we gained ground by amplifying our collective voices and strong actions through the Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative (DRJC), there is more to do to actualize our public policy agenda. Black and Brown communities continue to face barriers in building generational wealth, experiencing a fair and just criminal justice system, receiving culturally competent care, and learning in an environment that is considerate to their experience.

Established in 2015 by a small group of civic leaders to advocate for racial equity and social justice in Delaware, the DRJC reorganized in 2020 under the umbrella of the United Way of Delaware. The DRJC is a coalition of civic leaders and communitybased organizations united in a common vision for social justice, racial justice, and educational and economic opportunities for persons and communities of color in Delaware. To this end, The DRJC advocates for the adoption and implementation of policies and legislation that make Delaware a safer, more equitable place for families to live, learn, work, and play.

During the General Assembly's session convening in January 2023, the DRJC's priorities are:

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or more about DRJC, visit uwde.org/drjc	Media Contact: DRJC Director Raina Allen at rallen@uwde.c Public Policy Questions: Manager, Public Policy & Engagement, Alex Southerst asoutherst@uwde.c Updated 1/6/2
io ensure a safe and nurturing learning nvironment for all children and educators n and out of school and educational pportunities for impoverished students, ne DRJC will:	 Track and support the implementation and integration of House Bill 198 (Black historinto curricula in all Delaware school districts and extended school-day services. Advocate for the continuum of in-school and out-of-school supports and funding. Advocate for equity officers to ensure a safe and culturally competent learning environment for Black and Brown students.
Education	
Health Equity io ensure quality care is accessible to all, he DRJC will:	 Advocate for increased funding for the Bureau of Health Equity. Track the implementation of legislation passed last session that addresses the discrepancies in quality of care received by Black and Brown patients. Track the implementation of HS 2 for HB 344 which requires bias training for healthca workers.
Uoolth Cauitu	track the implementation of the gun safety package passed last session.
elaware, the DRJC will:	 transparency, accountability, and safety. Support Juvenile Justice reform. Promote amending the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights to improve relationship between Delawareans and law enforcement officials. Track implementation of HB 244 Fines & Fees. Advocate for increased support for gun violence prevention programs and policies and policies
Criminal Justice & Law Enforcement	Ensure policies to regulate the use of body worn cameras for law enforcement prioritiz
Ilack and Brown businesses, individuals, nd families have a fraction of the wealth f their white counterparts and fewer inancial opportunities and resources both istorically and today. To empower these usinesses and households, DRJC will:	 Promote policies that support and empower minority-owned businesses and proviopportunities for development and growth. Fight for improved access to quality affordable housing. Track and support implementation of HB 205 Expanding Access for Retirement at Necessary Savings program (EARNS). Advocate for the standard of need for TANF recipients to be raised for the first tim since 1996.

Young Men United Mentees Meet with HBCUs

"I was so happy to meet the athletic coaches from Morgan State. We exchanged

information and we are going to connect and talk more." Elijah, grade 12

"I was nervous walking into CIAA Day at first, but I got more comfortable as I talked to more people." DaShaun, grade 10

"I applied to 3 colleges, Lincoln, Virginia State and St. Augustine." London, grade 12

These were the excited reactions of three of the Young Men United (YMU) mentees who recently attended the organization's first annual Capitol Classic HBCU College Tour in Washington, D.C.

The goal of the excursion was to expose YMU mentees to HBCU culture and college experiences, to have an opportunity to engage with HBCU students and faculty, and to expose students who are undecided about their future to more information from which to make a decision about their future.

Ten HBCU Colleges, ARMY ROTC and NASA participated in the two-day event. Participating students were able to apply to all colleges in attendance for FREE.

Young Men United Mentorship Program works with leaders and organizations to improve academic outcomes, career and college success, life outcomes and upward mobility of young men of color. The Delaware organization is split into two cohorts, with the New Castle County cohort now having 27 mentees and the Kent and Sussex County cohort with 15 mentees.

We recognize the importance of events such as this to expose mentees to different environments and new people to help them dream and envision a future for themselves. We thank Capitol One and CIAA for their support in enabling this important experience for our young men.

DuPont Continues to Advocate for Equity in Delaware

DuPont's Wilmington IT&P Community Impact Team partnered with United Way of Delaware (UWDE) to facilitate its largest laptop donation ever as part of DuPont's commitment to a donation-first strategy for usable IT assets. The donation



provides more than 100 decommissioned laptops for use by UWDE and our community partners.

"DuPont's donation of refurbished laptops to the United Way of Delaware continues to demonstrate our commitment to community outreach," said Vince Stutts, Senior Director of Projects - Corporate Facilities & Real Estate, and member of the UWDE Board of Directors. "This donation also contributes to our sustainability goals of landfill waste reduction through repurposing and recycling."

DRJC applauds Edward D. Breen, DuPont Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer for spearheading a multitude of DuPont initiatives that further equity in Delaware and across the world. These laptops will enhance the lives of so many children, giving them access to mentoring, tutoring, the Book Nook program and other reading and learning resources. As always, DuPont stands with the people of Delaware and we thank you.

Governor's Summer Fellowship Applications Now Open

United Way of Delaware, The Governor's office and The Department of Education are

pleased to announce the second year of The Governor's Fellowship Program, a statewide initiative that provides FREE opportunities for more students (K-8) to enroll and attend structured summer programming. The program includes ELA supports to prevent learning loss during the summer.

The program provides paid summer work opportunities for high school juniors and seniors who may be interested in the education and/or social services field. Students will work at community-based summer camps in each county, and will receive on-site mentoring and the ability to network with state leaders and elected officials.

Applications are now being accepted. Qualified high school Juniors and Seniors can apply <u>here</u>.

This program is intended to engage and encourage young people's interest in the field of education. Last year, 47 Summer Fellows held positions at 19 sites across the state, serving 475 campers. This year, the program aims to expand to 100 Summer Fellows.

For more information on summer work, visit <u>de.gov/summerfellow</u>. For more information on summer camp programming for K-8 students, contact <u>Delaware 211.</u>

Charlotte King Scholarship Opportunities for Sussex County High School Seniors

The <u>Southern Delaware Alliance for Racial</u> <u>Justice (SDARJ)</u> is accepting applications for the 2023 Charlotte King Scholarship Program. Several \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to Sussex County seniors from the Class of 2023 who identify as Black and/or



African American. The essential criterion is a demonstrated concern for furthering racial understanding and justice.

The deadline to submit an application is April 2, 2023.

"We designed the scholarship program to lend support to students who understand that racial justice requires a commitment to community involvement and action," said Erica Novak, Chair of the SDARJ Education Committee. "We are seeking applicants who give serious thought to how they might carry through such a commitment as they pursue further education and their personal careers."

For more information, visit SDARJ here.

Do you have a record in Delaware?

You may be eligible for an expungement or pardon.

Join us at the

Second Chance Record Clearance and Employment Fair

Friday April 14, 2023

2 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Chase Fieldhouse 401 Garasches Lane, Wilmington, DE 19801

At this informational event, you'll learn:

- If eligible, how to get your record expunged or pardoned
- Required paperwork
- Financial assistance options



Registration

 Scan the QR code to pre-register or visit https://bit.ly/3Yy7vju

Walk-ins are welcome, but pre-registration is preferred



Questions?

Email: tnichols@dcjustice.org

JPMorgan Chase will provide reasonable accommodations brought to our attention. Please email delaware.communications@jpmchase.com with your accommodations need.





"A CONVERSATION WITH PARENTS"

Parents, please join us for the latest event in our series "A Conversation with Parents." These conversations pertaining to education, health and financial stability for your family, provide a safe space for you to discuss issues with others and share your experiences and life lessons. This session celebrates a continuation of Mental Health Awareness Month.

- March 21, 2023 "What Are They Thinking?" Brain science and Adverse Childhood Experience (ACEs) Skills – Identifying emotions, stress management. SEL competencies – Self-Awareness, Self-Management
- April 18, 2023 "Be Accountable" Preparing for self-sufficiency Skills
 Organization, self-discipline, and self-regulation. SEL competencies –
 Self-Management, Responsible Decision Making
- May 16, 2023 "Possibilities and Solutions" Boundaries and consequences Skills – Problem solving, goal setting. SEL competencies – Responsible Decision Making

Location: Route 9 Library & Innovation Center, 3022 New Castle Ave, New Castle, DE

Time: 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Child care and dinner will be provided! There will be a raffle for a \$40 ShopRite gift card at each session. You must attend to win!

Registration is strongly recommended. Register at https://bit.ly/convoparents



United Way of Delaware

For more information contact: Ken Livingston at klivingston@uwde.org

Calling All Youth Workers!

The Delaware Afterschool Network invites youth workers and volunteers to be part of the *Power* of Us campaign.

We need 100 youth workers and volunteers to complete the survey, and in sharing your story

POWEROFUS 2022 WORKFORCE SURVEY

with the campaign, you can help others SEE themselves as part of the workforce and understand why they, too, should take the survey.

Mentors and tutors, coaches, librarians, camp counselors, afterschool leaders, and more who support youth completed the Power of Us Workforce Survey in 2022 to ensure their experiences are reflected in the survey data.

A special thanks to Delaware's youth workers and volunteers who have already completed the survey!

We hope the rest of you will participate. The deadline has been extended to March 31, 2023. Please take the survey using our state-specific survey link: <u>Delaware Power Of</u> <u>Us Survey</u>



Free Tax Help Now Available

UWDE partners with Nehemiah Gateway Development Corporation and First State Community Action Agency to promote FREE tax filing services. FREE in-person dropoff, available by appointment only, and virtual tax services are available. For the most current information, call 2-1-1 or visit **Nehemiah Gateway CDC**. Learn more about making a tax appointment **here** and about volunteering **here**

DELAWARE'S HOME FOR FREE TAX PREP

Serving those who need it most, including non-filers! schold income \$57,000 or less, or \$0 taxable income but need to the to receive stimulus payments



- Q. ID for taxpayer and spouse
- W-2s, 1099s, 1099-MISC, 1099-NEC, Q, 1099-R, 1099-SSA for all employers, 🛛 6419 Advance Child Tax Credit retirement, and social security benefits (no pay stubs accepted)
- ITIN letter for everyone listed on tax return

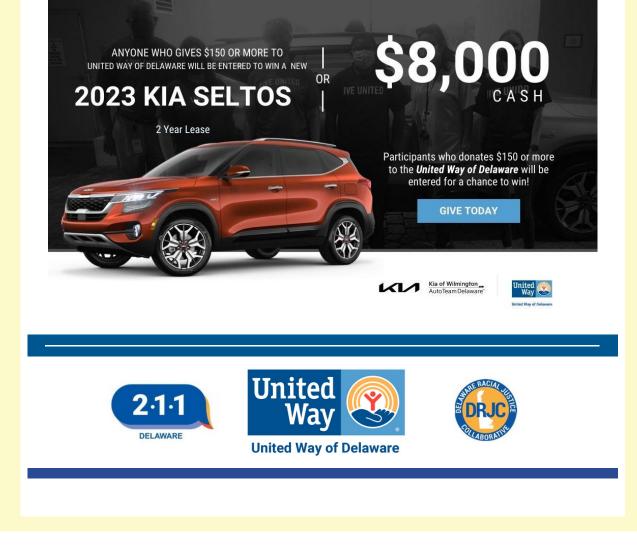
and 6475 Economic Impact Payment (EIP) stimulus letters

- Childcare statement from all providers with address and tax ID# and/or SS# for childcare Bank account and routing provider (or provide receipts
 - with amounts paid)
- 1098s for education expenses paid, mortgage interest paid, property taxes paid and list of any other itemized deductions
 Copy of prior-year tax return (may be required for new credits)

Bank account and routing

number for direct deposit





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