

Albany Damien Center

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee Newsletter



Winter 2026

Welcome to February and Black History Month!



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March is **Women's History Month!**

A Note from...



"We are all one - and if we don't know it, we will learn it the hard way."

- Bayard Rustin (1912 – 1987)

Bayard Rustin was an American political activist and leader in social movements for civil rights, socialism, nonviolence, and gay rights. Rustin was the principal organizer of the March on Washington in 1963.

Did you know?



The **Immigrant Legal Resource Center** has put together "Red Cards," or "Know Your Rights" cards, with info on how to protect your rights when encountering U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. Find the printout in multiple languages at:

waimmigranthealth.org/immigration-action-center/red-card/

You have constitutional rights:

- DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR if an immigration agent is knocking on the door.
- DO NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS from an immigration agent if they try to talk to you. You have the right to remain silent.
- DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING without first speaking to a lawyer. You have the right to speak with a lawyer.
- If you are outside of your home, ask the agent if you are free to leave and if they say yes, leave calmly.
- GIVE THIS CARD TO THE AGENT. If you are inside of your home, show the card through the window or slide it under the door.

I do not wish to speak with you, answer your questions, or sign or hand you any documents based on my 5th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.

I do not give you permission to enter my home based on my 4th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution unless you have a warrant to enter, signed by a judge or magistrate with my name on it that you slide under the door.

I do not give you permission to search any of my belongings based on my 4th Amendment rights.

I choose to exercise my constitutional rights.

These cards are available to citizens and noncitizens alike.

What DEI Really Means:

In a time of increased polarization around DEI, we have an opportunity to refocus attention on the underlying principles that everyone agrees with: **fairness, respect, and creating workplaces where all employees can contribute their best.** By focusing on measurable outcomes rather than terminology, calling people into conversations rather than calling them out, and holding ourselves accountable, we can continue the essential work of building inclusive cultures. The path forward requires understanding multiple perspectives, checking our own bias, and demonstrating how inclusive cultures directly contribute to our personal and professional success.

DEI Activity:

Can you match the word to the correct definition?

Ally	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
Equity	A person who supports a group other than their own.
BIPOC	Representation of various identities (race, gender, age, ability, etc.)
Diversity	Ensuring everyone has what they need to succeed, recognizing historical disparities.
Cultural Humility	Automatic stereotypes or attitudes toward groups, often outside of conscious awareness.
Implicit/Unconscious Bias	A lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critiquing one's own biases.

Diversity Calendar:

February:

Black History Month

February 1st – National Freedom Day

February 4th – Rosa Parks' Birthday

February 7th – National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

February 14th – Frederick Douglass' Birthday

February 20th – World Day of Social Justice

March:

National Women's History Month + National Developmental DBL

March 8th – International Women's Day

March 21st – Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

March 25th – Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery

March 31st – International Transgender Day of Visibility

Who are the members of DEI?

The DEI Committee is currently made up of six employees and one board member. If you have interest in being a member, please contact any member of the committee.

Name	Department/Title
Andrew Earle	Peer Navigator
Avery Crawford	Senior Accountant
Chris Tarnowski	Associate Executive Director, Operations
Jay Fields	Employment Advocate
Marz Albarran	Board Member
Marcus May	Peer Navigator
Ryan Ramdass	LGBT Health Navigator



How can I get involved? Have ideas related to DEI? Let us know! Watch for future newsletters that will contain information & opportunities on DEI projects.