

The Beacon

A Newsletter of the New York Coalition of One Hundred Black Women, Inc.

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From the President,

Let me begin by wishing you a Happy Women's History Month. However, just as with Black History Month, the recognition of women's accomplishments throughout the world should not be limited to one month out of the year. We should be proud that we are living in a time when the second highest elected official in the United States is Vice President Kamala Harris, A BLACK WOMAN, and we are poised to witness the confirmation of the Honorable Ketanji Brown-Jackson, A BLACK WOMAN, to serve on the United States Supreme Court! Here is some information you might also want to share with friends and family about other women during this Women's History Month:

- **The 19th amendment didn't give *all* women the right to vote.** The 19th amendment, which granted women the right to vote, was signed into law on August 26, 1920. But at the time, a number of other laws prohibited Native American women, Black women, Asian American women, and Latinx women from voting, among others. It wasn't until 1924 that Native women born in the United States were granted citizenship, allowing them to vote. But even after that, Native women and other women of color were prevented from voting by state laws such as poll taxes and literacy tests. It wasn't until 1965, when President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law, that discriminatory tactics such as literacy tests were outlawed, and all women could vote.
- **And now...women make up 27 percent of Congress.** One-hundred and forty-five women serve in the United States Congress out of 535 total members. Though the number of women representatives continues to rise, it's important to keep in mind that the United States population is 50.8 percent female, according to Census data.
- **Claudette Colvin refused to give up her bus seat 9 months before Rosa Parks did.** Rosa Parks' contributions to the Civil Rights Movement are undeniable. But nine months before she refused to give up her seat on a bus for a white person in Montgomery, Alabama, 15-year-old Claudette Colvin did the same thing on the same bus system. But Colvin isn't widely recognized for her act. On March 2, 1955, the day she was arrested, she had been learning about Black history at her school. "My head was just too full of black history, you know, the oppression that we went through," she told NPR in 2009. "It felt like Sojourner Truth was on one side pushing me down, and Harriet Tubman was on the other side of me pushing me down. I couldn't get up." She was one of the plaintiffs in *Browder v. Gayle*, the case that ended up overturning bus segregation laws in Montgomery.

There is a limitless amount of information to learn and share about the contributions women have made to the global society. Please take some time to expand your knowledge about the role women have played and continue to play in the world and remember, "Where there is a woman, there is magic." Ntozake Shange

Barbara Kairson, Ph.D.
President



**Black "Herstory" Live
A Conversation With
Dr. Hazel Dukes, President,
NAACP New York State Conference**

If you missed the February 26th General Membership Meeting, you missed a unique opportunity to hear from a living civil rights icon. Dr. Hazel Dukes, President, NAACP New York State Conference and longtime Coalition member, spoke with Coalition members and guests about her time spent working in the Civil Rights movement and shared what gives her hope for the future. Dr. Dukes who at the time was a few days away from celebrating her 90th birthday, reminded us that there is still much work to be done and that we don't have the luxury of being tired.

Thank you Dr. Dukes for your inspiring words and "Happy Belated Birthday" from your Coalition sisters.



Are You Ready?

Please be reminded that 2022 is an Election year for the Coalition. In October you will have the opportunity to choose the Officers and Directors who will lead the Coalition for the next two years. However, to be eligible to vote in the October election, you must be financial by March 31st.

If you have not paid your dues for 2022 and would like to do so, please contact Elizabeth Carde, 3rd Vice President, at: nycobw.vpmembership17@gmail.com or (212) 666-5840. You may also contact Danielle Doucette, Financial Secretary, at: nycobw.finsecretary20@gmail.com for information on how you can become financial and vote in the upcoming election.



After more than 2 years, we are excited to announce that plans are being made for an IN-PERSON General Membership Meeting to be held in April! Arrangements are being finalized and you will receive information prior to the meeting so that you may plan accordingly. Please note that Covid protocols will be followed to insure a safe environment for all who attend.

Please check your email regularly for updated information.



Happy Birthday to the following Coalition sisters:

January

- Patti Jacobs
- Ambassador Suzan Johnson-Cook
- Dr. Wendy Kelly Carter
- Geneva Morgan-Trotman
- Dr. Karen Myrie

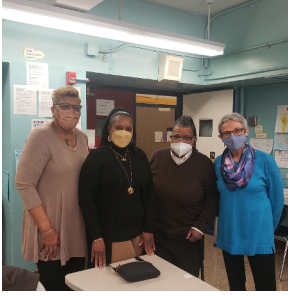
February

- Abaynesh Asrat
- Edith Davenport
- Natatia Griffith
- Honorable Debra James
- Felicia Stanley

March

- Joan Arnold
- Dr. Hazel Dukes
- Monica Noel
- Maxine Spence

Working to Empower Future Voters



From left to right

Dr. Barbara Kairson, President, NYCOBW

Dr. Arnette Crocker, Principal, WAE

Sherletta McCaskill, League of Women Voters of the City of New York

Diane Burrows, Co-President, League of Women Voters of the City of New York

On March 7, 2022, a meeting was held at the Women's Academy of Excellence (WAE) High School in the Bronx to discuss ways in which students could increase their civic awareness and involvement by learning about local, state and federal government operations and how those things impact their lives and their communities. At the meeting, teachers and staff were introduced to an exciting opportunity where students will be able to increase their civic knowledge and gain information on how they can advocate for change within their communities.

Diane Burrows, Co-President of the League of Women Voters of the City of New York; Sherletta McCaskill of the League of Women Voters of the City of New York; Dr. Arnette Crocker, Principal of the Women's Academy of Excellence (WAE) and Dr. Barbara Kairson, President of the New York Coalition of One Hundred Black Women met with teachers and staff of WAE to discuss a series of educational modules developed by the League of Women Voters. The modules are designed to introduce students to concepts of Voter Engagement, Lobbying, and Advocating for Change. Students will participate in training sessions led by League of Women Voters representatives and at the conclusion of the series, the students will be encouraged to create their own voter registration drive and identify an existing problem in their community where they might advocate for corrective action. It is also hoped that by increasing their knowledge, they will become catalysts for increased voter participation in their families, their school and their communities long after this training has ended.

President Kairson stated, "In a City where 87% of eligible New York City residents are registered, but where some elections are determined by less than 20% of voter turn-out, the New York Coalition of One Hundred Black Women is proud to work with The Women's Academy of Excellence and the League of Women Voters of the City of New York to prepare, empower and hopefully engage future voters."

The Coalition... Extending a Helping Hand

In May 2021, Dr. Janet Kiley and Dr. Carmen Pannell of the Education Committee delivered gift bags to PS 30M, also known as the Rafael Hernandez/Langston Hughes School, located in Harlem. The bags containing hygiene items and Foodtown gift cards were distributed to homeless students enrolled in the school as part of the Coalition's Adopt-A-School initiative.

Since that time, Dr. Pannell has continued to work with the school and now serves as a Math Tutor for students at the school. Dr. Pannell recently mentioned how rewarding she finds the interaction with the students and encourages others who have the interest and the time to also become involved as Tutors.

If you would like to learn more about how you can participate in the Adopt-A-School initiative as a Tutor, please contact Dr. Carmen Pannell at: cdp10cdp@gmail.com or at (212) 234-6336.

