



February 23, 2023

Road Map Bulletin: Black History Month in Review

Happy Thursday, Mount Sinai Community –

As many of you know, February is Black History Month. Across Mount Sinai, we took the time this month to celebrate and reflect on Black history and heritage with events, and we wanted to use this week’s Bulletin to thank those who helped make these events a reality and highlight some firsthand reflections from colleagues who attended them.

The first event we want to highlight is the **Black History Month Film Series**. Throughout the month, Mount Sinai celebrated Black history through cinema, highlighting a variety of films and documentaries exploring the Civil Rights Movement and the intersection of race with the experience of individuals with disabilities and the LGBTQ+ community. After the screenings, attendees were encouraged to engage in conversations around the evolution of Black history and culture, including the historical significance of oppression. The documentaries and films *John Lewis: Good Trouble*, *Selma*, and *Just Mercy* were among those featured.



Picture (from left): Shana Dacon-Pereira, Assistant Vice President for the Office for Diversity and Inclusion; Jazmin Rodriguez, Communications Manager for the Office for Diversity and Inclusion; Latifa Jones, Administrative Manager at Mount Sinai West

Kristine Alpi, MLS, MPH, PhD, AHIP, FMLA, Associate Dean of Libraries and Information Sciences at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, attended a screening of the movie *John Lewis: Good Trouble*. She told us that she attended the event “to be inspired by John Lewis’ activism and meet Mount Sinai colleagues” but the event went far beyond that. “While his youthful activism is well known and highlighted during Black History Month, the unanticipated takeaway came from watching his personal evolution sitting with my younger Mount Sinai colleagues. As John Lewis grew older, he seemed to draw even more energy from a full schedule of events and meetings with community members. Staying after work to experience it reminded me that although we find ourselves incredibly busy at Mount Sinai, we can gain energy from coming together to learn and prioritize inclusion and antiracism efforts.”

Latifa Jones, Administrative Manager for Radiation Oncology at Mount Sinai West, told us that her takeaway from Bryan Stevenson’s *Just Mercy* was that, “As a people, we sometimes forget the importance of what it means to be human. Outside of race, gender, class, or creed, we are all first human. This fact alone should be reason enough to provide Grace and Mercy to all regardless of the situation.” She said the movie “was thought provoking and gave greater clarity on what took place in the past within the justice system and what is still taking place to some degree today. Justice for all is and will always be an ongoing fight for Black/African American people ... Although I had feelings of helplessness during the film, it was a reminder to never forget how far we have come as Black people. We must continue to educate all people so that we are not in danger of repeating the past ”

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Robin Givan, Patient Representative and co-lead of the Black Leaders Advocating for Change and Community (BLACC) Employee Resource Group at Mount Sinai Queens, told us that viewing *Selma* “magnified the struggle Black people endured to get equal voting rights as human beings. It reminded me of the hatred, ignorance, and white privilege portrayed by those who thought they were superior to others.” But her takeaway wasn’t despair—it was a call to action: “That’s why we should take the opportunity to VOTE in all elections. History shows us how those before us fought and died for these rights.”

During Black History Month, Mount Sinai also hosted a virtual **Healing Circle** event, organized by the BLACC Employee Resource Group. This was an opportunity for the entire community to reflect on the struggles Black Americans have overcome, while sharing thoughts on how to continue uplifting and supporting marginalized communities.

Other events and celebrations throughout the month included a lively performance by West Prep Academy band, organized by **Ronald Powers**, RRT, CCT, Assistant Director of Respiratory Therapy and co-lead of the Diversity Council and BLACC Employee Resource Group at Mount Sinai Morningside (MSM) and a factoid series hosted by the Corporate Services Center (CSC) Diversity Council that showcased forgotten Black history. Once again, thank you to everyone who made these celebrations possible!



West Prep Academy Band's Performance at MSM

If you missed out on these events and still want to participate, there's still time — **THIS EVENING the BLACC ERG is hosting a Paint Reflections Night.** Details are below!

All the best,
Angela and Shawn

Join Us for an Upcoming Event

Paint Reflections Night: The BLACC ERG invites you to join us for Paint Reflections Night on Thursday, February 23 from 6:30-8 pm. Enjoy an evening of art and reflection with your colleagues as you recreate an image using the supplies of your choice and reflect upon the meaning of the month. All staff, students and faculty are welcome! [Register here](#).

Black History Month Film Series: Celebrate the month through cinema as we highlight a variety of films and documentaries exploring the civil rights movement, the experiences of individuals with disabilities, and the LGBTQ+ community at the intersection of race. Click the registration link to view exact room locations for the screenings below.

- **Monday, February 27 | *Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution*** at New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai | [Registration Link](#)
- **Tuesday, February 28 | *Till*** at the Corporate Services Center | [Registration Link](#)

Chats for Change: Racism x Homelessness—Chats for Change is a production of the Icahn School of Medicine's Racism and Bias Initiative. Join facilitators Jay Johnson, CHES, and Jenn Meyer, LMSW, MPH, on Tuesday, March 7 from noon-1 pm. In 2020, the homeless population in the United States was around 600,000. Isolated and ostracized by society, people experiencing homelessness suffer interpersonal and institutional violence, with a disproportionate number of people stemming from Black and brown communities. Join us as we discuss the implications of homelessness from a public health and racial justice lens and re-imagine an equity-focused approach. Register [here](#).

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