Celebrating Diversity and the Holidays

Dear Colleagues,

Across cultures, religions, nations, and secular designations, December has more holiday celebrations than there are days in the month. I hope everyone in the Baruch community is taking time to see, catch up with, or remember loved ones during this holiday season. As the new year approaches, this is also a good time to renew our commitment to creating a welcoming, diverse, inclusive environment at Baruch and in our lives outside of the college.

With classes on break until Monday, January 27, I ask that you look ahead to your February and March calendar and save some dates for important upcoming events. February is National African American History Month, and as such, we have already begun planning events that celebrate the contributions that African Americans have made to American history in their struggles for freedom and equality. Now is the time to schedule yourself in, before you inevitably get overbooked once the spring semester begins!

**Background Reading**

As we look forward to this winter’s events, I wanted to share some materials that you could review in advance.

- "The 1619 Project": I invite you to visit this multimedia project by the *New York Times* that examines the origins and legacy of slavery in the U.S. The project
commemorates the 400th anniversary of the first enslaved people being brought to the U.S. from West Africa. Baruch faculty and staff can access the report when they redeem their free subscription to the *New York Times* with an [academic pass](#).

- **Slavery’s Descendants: Shared Legacies of Race and Reconciliation**: The contributors to this edited volume tell their stories of dealing with America’s racial past through their experiences and their family histories. Some are descendants of slaveholders, others are descendants of the enslaved, and many are descendants of both slaveholders and the enslaved. They share a commitment to critical discussion and thinking about our nation’s history of oppression and its impact, as well as their quest to achieve a just and truthful society that acknowledges its past and seeks to heal. See related events below.

- **White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism** by Robin DiAngelo: This book diagnoses the “fragile” experiences of white people in discussing racism and how we might build our capacity in the ongoing work toward racial justice. See related events below.

### February and March Events
The following list will be updated as new programs are added to the calendar.

- **Student, Faculty, and Staff Read-Aloud and Book Discussion**
  Sponsored by the Collective to Undo Racism at Baruch (CURB), this event features select chapters from *Slavery’s Descendants: Shared Legacies of Race and Reconciliation* to be read with a discussion following, in which students will be paired with faculty or staff. Readings will take place during multiple time slots during the day. If you are interested in being a facilitator for the read-aloud event, please contact [Mona.Jha@baruch.cuny.edu](mailto:Mona.Jha@baruch.cuny.edu).
  **When**: Tuesday, Feb. 4
    - 10–11:30 am
    - 11:30 am–1 pm
    - 1–2:30 pm
    - 2:30–4 pm
  **Where**: NVC Room 14-266
  **RSVP**: [DiversityEventsRSVP@baruch.cuny.edu](mailto:DiversityEventsRSVP@baruch.cuny.edu)
**Editor Discussion**

Dionne Ford, co-editor of *Slavery’s Descendants*, discusses the vision of *Coming to the Table*, a national racial reconciliation organization.

**When:** Thursday, Feb. 13, noon–2 pm  
**Where:** Information and Technology Building, Rackow Conference Rooms 750 and 760  
**RSVP:** DiversityEventsRSVP@baruch.cuny.edu

**Student, Faculty, and Staff Book Discussion**

Sponsored by CURB, this book discussion pairs students with faculty or staff to discuss *White Fragility*. Events will take place across several dates as noted below. More details coming in January. If you are interested in being a facilitator for the book discussion, please contact Mona.Jha@baruch.cuny.edu.

**When and Where:**

- Thursday, Feb. 27, NVC Room 14-266  
- Tuesday, Mar. 3, NVC Room 14-269  
- Thursday, Mar. 19, NVC Room 14-266  
- Tuesday, Mar. 24, NVC Room 14-266  

**Time:** 12:30–1:30 pm  
**RSVP:** DiversityEventsRSVP@baruch.cuny.edu

**Best Wishes for 2020**

Let me take this opportunity to wish you a safe and happy holiday season. I look forward to another year of your continued support of Baruch’s diversity and inclusion initiatives and making the community a stronger, safer place.

Sincerely,

Mona Jha, Esq.  
Chief Diversity Officer