

Papitto Opportunity Connection

February 2023

Celebrating Black History Month

February is Black History Month, a time to recognize and showcase the achievements, challenges and sacrifices made by African Americans who have helped develop and strengthen this country. This month, we are highlighting some of our community partners that are making a huge impact and breaking barriers for communities of color in Rhode Island.

In order to move forward, you have to look back.

Take a step back in history and experience the RI Black Heritage Society's latest exhibit "Before Malcolm & Martin: The Fight for Civil Rights in RI, 1865-1968." Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X were pivotal leaders during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. However, men and women in Rhode Island were fighting for civil rights long before these leaders were born. This new exhibit explores the seminal role that Rhode Islanders, like the Reverend Mahlon van Horne and restaurateur, George T. Downing, played, advocating for civil rights for people of color in the state after the Civil War to the mid twentieth century.

NEW EXHIBIT

BEFORE

MALCOM & MARTIN

THE FIGHT FOR
CIVIL RIGHTS IN RI,
1865-1968

2.08.23



RIBHS
RHODE ISLAND BLACK HERITAGE SOCIETY

600 MT. PLEASANT AV
BUILDING 8

Everyone loves to hear a good story. Storytellers pique our curiosity, offer cultural understanding and experiences, explore different worlds, countries, history, and traditions while often teaching valuable lessons.

The RI Black Storytellers (RIBS) have been doing this for 25 years. The organization strives to share cultural values, history, awareness and the application of Black storytelling through performances, workshops, cultural, educational, and historical experiences. Throughout the year, RIBS offers workshops in storytelling, writing, and related arts as a part of the development of the next generation of storytellers along with professional development workshops for those interested in enhancing cultural awareness and improving their performances and communi-



cation skills.



All these elements come together to create the organization's FUNDA FEST: A Celebration of Black Storytelling. This year's theme, *Sankofa*, encompasses taking from the past what is good and bringing it into the present to make progress in the future.

Visit the Stages of Freedom African American Museum, view the exhibits of Rhode Island African American history and learn the remarkable stories of some of Rhode Island's influential African Americans, including opera singer Sissieretta Jones, Providence's Black Victorian-era power couple Edward and Christiana Bannister, Newport caterer George T. Downing, and entrepreneur Eleanor Eldridge. Stop by the museum gift shop or join historian Ray Rickman on a walking tour of Providence's East Side, where the history of African Americans is written in its buildings.



Gearing Up For 401Gives

Mark your calendar, 401Gives, Rhode Island's statewide day of giving, is April 1, 2023 - just about six weeks away. Powered by United Way of Rhode Island and presenting sponsor Papiitto Opportunity Connection, 401Gives is a 24-hour fundraising campaign designed to bring people together to make a difference for local nonprofits that deliver vital services to our communities throughout the state. 401Gives unites and offers everyone a safe, comfortable, and familiar virtual fundraising experience all while giving nonprofits unrestricted funds that strengthen Rhode Island

To gear up for 401Gives, the United Way offers a variety of resources designed to help

you build a successful campaign.



Spread The Word!

We're asking for your help. Spread the word about the [2023 Transform RI Scholarship \(TRIS\)](#). It is an opportunity for high school students of color to use their voice and share their ideas to create real change in their community.

Created by [Papitto Opportunity Connection \(POC\)](#) the Transform Rhode Island Scholarship (TRIS) application asks RI's high school students of color to answer one simple question:

“If you were given a million dollars to better the lives of Rhode Island’s communities of color either through education, job skills training, business, housing or healthcare, how would you do it?”

POC committed to investing \$1 million in making the winning idea a reality and the winning student not only receives a \$25,000 scholarship, but also has a seat at the table and is part of implementing the idea. This year, TEN TRIS finalists will be awarded one-time scholarships worth between \$5,000 -- \$25,000 and POC again will invest \$1 million to make the winning idea become a reality.

Spread the word about this amazing opportunity that offers a chance for RI's high school students of color to have a voice and create real change in their communities.

To learn more, click [here](#).



2022 Transform RI Scholarship (TRIS) Winner Mariam Kaba Hosts Job Readiness Fair

Mariam Kaba the first ever winner of the [Transform Rhode Island Scholarship](#) is hosting a job readiness fair for 16-26 year-olds on Thursday, February 23 12:00 pm--3:30 pm at the [Woonsocket Education Center](#),

The job fair will kick off with a panel discussion featuring employers from a variety of industries including [Amica](#), [Wright's Dairy Farm](#), City Personnel, [Senedia](#), and [Geri's Bluffing Boutique](#). The session will be facilitated by [Charise Wilson](#), Owner of [Workforce Ready Solutions LLC](#).

Kick-Start Your Career

Please join us for a half-day session and a panel discussion with local employers facilitated by Charise Wilson, owner of Workforce Ready Solutions, LLC!



What to know:

- Explore resumé writing and personal branding
- The day will end with a panel discussion and an opportunity to ask local employers questions
- Great opportunity to network
- If you have one, bring a copy of your resumé
- Lunch will be provided!
- This workshop is designed for 16-26 year olds

Thursday,
February 23rd
12:00 pm-3:30 pm

Woonsocket
Education Center
115 Main Street

Supporting Partners



If you are interested in attending, please register by Monday, February 20th by scanning the QR.



This free event is open to the public and is a great opportunity for job seekers to learn about different industries available in the area, connect with local employers, and gain valuable advice.