



## DIVERSITY COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT

*Carisk Partners will be leaders by continuing to embrace the differences of its team members to expand its competitive edge; while promoting a diverse and inclusive environment through our commitment to education both internally and externally.*


*We will leverage our unique capacity as change agents to strengthen our relationships with our Carisk team members, and with the communities and business partners we all serve.*

*We will strive to do good by being good.*



*"I have always loved meeting new people from different backgrounds. It was always intriguing to me to hear someone else's "story". It is my strong belief that people and organizations make better decisions when they have diversity of thoughts. Each of us bring our life experiences into all we do. Everyone's life experiences generally created a perspective, whether consciously or unconsciously. Having a diverse workplace only strengthens the paths we choose to take."*

## Welcome

We welcome the Spring Edition of the Carisk Kaleidoscope with a quote from our CEO, Joseph Berardo, Jr.; expressing his perspective on diversity. Q1, 2021 was contemplative in nature. Every month in this quarter had dates or entire months honoring people or events that made us think about diversity, and the leaders that facilitated success through extraordinary circumstances. Our article "Excellence in Diversity is dedicated to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., commemorated on January 18th; Black History Month, celebrated in February, as well as Presidents Day on the 15th. "The Talk," and "First Ladies Club" is a tribute to Women's History Month celebrated in March. Also, the somber one year anniversary of Covid-19 was on March 11. Diane shared her reflections on what this has meant for her; I am sure that many of us share her sentiments. "Today in IT" brings us the first of 2 articles about facial recognition algorithms, and its implications for people of color, women, and the elderly. Finally, reference links have been included for your additional reading pleasure. We hope you enjoy our Spring edition. 

## Human Family

BY MAYA ANGELOU

I note the obvious differences  
in the human family.  
Some of us are serious,  
some thrive on comedy.

Some declare their lives are lived  
as true profundity,  
and others claim they really live  
the real reality.

The variety of our skin tones  
can confuse, bemuse, delight,  
brown and pink and beige and  
purple, tan and blue and white.

I've sailed upon the seven seas  
and stopped in every land,  
I've seen the wonders of the world  
not yet one common man.

I know ten thousand women  
called Jane and Mary Jane,  
but I've not seen any two  
who really were the same.

We love and lose in China,  
we weep on England's moors,  
and laugh and moan in Guinea,  
and thrive on Spanish shores.

We seek success in Finland,  
are born and die in Maine.  
In minor ways we differ,  
in major we're the same.

I note the obvious differences  
between each sort and type,  
but we are more alike, my friends,  
than we are unlike.

We are more alike, my friends,  
than we are unlike.

We are more alike, my friends,  
than we are unlike.



## Members of the Diversity Council



### LEADER OF THE DIVERSITY COUNCIL Anabel Rawlins

Provider Relations Specialist  
Miami, FL

*"We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color." – Maya Angelou*



### Sally Balioni

Sales Manager, CiC  
Wall, NJ

*"You cannot change what you are, only what you do."*



### Cecilia Charles

Senior Provider Relations Coordinator  
Florham Park, NJ

*"Strength lies in differences, not in similarities"*



### Caroline de Brito Gottlieb

Data and Product Manager  
NYC/Remote

*"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences." –Audre Lorde*



### Lori Height

Executive Sales Assistant  
Wall, NJ

*Promoting a community of acceptance and belonging*



### Brian DeNichilo

System Administrator  
Florham Park, NJ

*"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." – Nelson Mandela*



### Marybeth Lombardino

Administrative Assistant  
Florham Park, NJ

*"The headlines you make in this life will be based on the differences you made in the lives of others"*



### Sunita Mathur

Claim File Coordinator  
Florham Park, NJ

*"Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilization" –Mahatma Gandhi*



### Diane Nicolo

Director of Administration  
Remote

*"Every person is a new door to a different world"*



### Robert Post

Vice President, Strategic Initiatives, Human Resources and Training | Florham Park, NJ

*"We have become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams." –Jimmy Carter*



### Grace Roque

Special Projects Manager  
Miami, FL

*"Having the right attitude & mindset can literally change your life."*



### Michael Rydman

Senior Vice President, Sales  
Benicia, California

*"All men are created equal" –Thomas Jefferson, 1776*



### Allen Spokane

Chief Technology Officer  
Florham Park, NJ

*"Nobody Wins Unless Everybody Wins" – Bruce Springsteen*



### David Vittoria

Senior Vice President,  
Clinical Business & Product Development  
Miami, FL

*"Our diversity is the one thing we all have in common."*

## Reflections on Covid-19

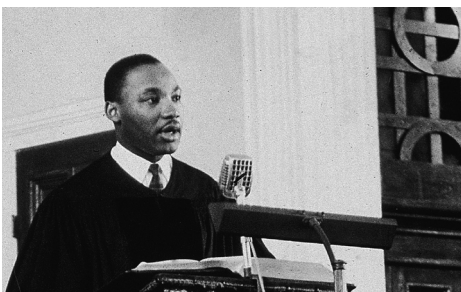
One year ago the life we knew ENDED. We were told to stay home, stay safe-and we did. School stopped, work stopped-LIFE STOPPED. No stores, no restaurants. No concerts. No sports. We stayed home, and.....what did we do? We worried (a lot), we watched news updates (constantly), we looked for toilet paper (still don't know why 🧑). Some of us lost people that we shouldn't have, and couldn't say goodbye to. (MY brother-in-law-Tony, our hearts are forever broken 💔.) We learned to make masks part of our attire 😷. We learned that washing our hands was essential to staying healthy. 🧼. We social distanced (6 feet apart). We searched for cleaning products, (Lysol was never so desirable). We appreciated everyone who made this new existence possible (you know who you are-THANK YOU.) We learned how to zoom to work, to teach, to learn, to celebrate birthdays, holidays and everyday life. Some of us learned to cook, to paint, to write, to dance. Some of us worried more, grieved more than others, and prayed more. We realized how fragile life is. We became stronger, weaker, more prayerful, happier, sadder. We became confused. A year later and we are still not quite right. We are looking for that light at the end of the tunnel, praying it's within reach. If anything good came out of this nightmare I hope it's that we learned how important family is, and how life can change in a heartbeat. I long for the days when my whole family is TOGETHER, laughing, hugging, and enjoying each other. I know we can't replace what we've lost, and who we've lost, but I hope that what is ahead of us will make us stronger, happier and more grateful. I pray we NEVER see a year like this again. 🙏

## Excellence in Diversity

*"To bring about change, you must not be afraid to take the first step. We will fail when we fail to try."*  
*Rosa Parks, American Civil Rights Activist*

This is a very brief summary about 3 exceptional gentlemen who came from 3 very diverse backgrounds; they met during one of the most tumultuous, and consequential time periods in US history-The Civil Rights Movement. Their collaborations alongside their unique talents, grit, and determination changed the world. They started their careers as a **minister**, a **journalist**, and a **teacher**. Their careers would end very differently; the **minister** was a civil rights activist/Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; the **journalist** was the 35th US president, and the **teacher** succeeded as the 36th US President.

The **minister** was born in Atlanta, Ga; a grandson of a sharecropper, and used Mahatma Gandhi as his inspiration; he graduated from Morehouse College, a HBCU (Historically Black College and University), in 1948. The **journalist** was born into elite wealth in Brookline, MA, almost died in WWII, his first job was as a journalist with Hearst Newspapers; he graduated from Harvard University in 1940. The **teacher** was born in a small farmhouse in Stonewall, Texas, felt the sting of rural poverty, and worked as a day laborer for a while; he graduated from Southwest Texas State Teachers School in 1930.



None of these 3 gentlemen lived to see their 65th birthday. They would all die within 9 years of each other. Two were assassinated in the prime of their lives at the ages of 46 and 39, and one died of a heart attack in his ranch in Stonewall, TX at the age of 64. One can even argue that there was a generational difference; the **minister** was 21 years younger than the **teacher**. Their racial, age and socioeconomic diversity did not hinder them from



finding common ground, and working together while initiating, and executing 3 landmark pieces of legislation... The Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Civil Rights Act of 1968. They did not let their differences stand in the way of greatness; they transformed the world.



## The Minister and the Journalist

"The time is always right to do what is right"

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., American Minister and Civil Rights Activist**

**January 15, 1929-April 4, 1968**

"The rights of every man is diminished when the rights of one man are threatened"

**John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 35th U.S. President**

**May 29, 1917-November 22, 1963**

**Presidential Term: January 20, 1961-November 22, 1963**

The Montgomery Bus Boycott, led by a 26 year old Baptist minister named Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., following Rosa Park's historic act of civil disobedience officially started the civil rights movement on December 5, 1955.

Although President Kennedy was aware of the needs of African Americans; he knew that if he moved too quickly he would lose support for other items on his agenda. He began to address those needs by increasing the amount of African Americans working in the federal government.

President Kennedy knew that he did not have the votes necessary to pass any substantial civil rights legislation, because of the Southern filibuster. He remained committed to civil rights by renewing the Civil Rights Commission, and in 1961 appointed Senator Harris Wofford (PA), to be his Special Assistant for Civil Rights; they strategized to focus heavily on executive actions in lieu of legislation. The rapidly evolving episodes of the time period, however derailed his plans; history would not wait, and he was forced into action.

- On May 21, 1961, a church service in Montgomery AL, led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was attended by more than 1,000 Freedom Riders. The churchgoers were met with violence, and a deadly riot followed. President Kennedy had to send the federal marshals for protection.
- A black young man named James H. Meredith fought for his admission at the segregated University of Mississippi at Oxford ("Ole Miss"), all the way to the Supreme Court; which ordered his acceptance. President Kennedy sent US Marshals to Mississippi, on September 29, 1962 to ensure that the decision would be carried out. Meanwhile, he made an arrangement with Governor Ross Barnett. Meredith would register on a Sunday, and enough state troopers would be provided to protect both Meredith, and the US Marshals. Governor Barnett did not follow through. As President Kennedy was about to address the nation and announce the agreement; the state troopers disappeared, and a mob began attacking Meredith, and the US Marshals. In Fort Bragg, NC there were military soldiers on standby, and President Kennedy was forced to call them in; other battalions soon followed by plane and trucks. By the following morning 24,000 troops were patrolling Oxford, Mississippi, and James H. Meredith became the first African American to become enrolled in "Ole Miss".
- Television played a crucial role in the civil rights movement. In the spring of 1963, television brought the violence occurring in Birmingham, AL between the civil rights demonstrators, and the police inside the homes of American families; this deeply affected the tone of public opinion. The actions in Birmingham, AL made President Kennedy feel that it was time to move more forcefully on civil rights. The unpleasant scenes in Birmingham made up his mind. The President became directly involved in working out a compromise to integrate many of the key establishments in Birmingham.



*President Kennedy addresses the nation on civil rights, June 11, 1963*

- On June 12, 1963, a few hours after President Kennedy addressed the nation on civil rights; 37 year old Medgar Evers, a civil rights activist, field secretary for the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), and a World War II veteran was shot in the driveway of his home in Jackson, Mississippi. He was taken to a local hospital, but denied admission, because of his race; after his identity was made known he was admitted, but was declared dead 50 minutes later. This was how Medgar Evers became the first African American admitted to a segregated hospital in Mississippi.

The President knew that time was of the essence, and he could not wait any longer for additional action. He introduced a bold Civil Rights Law that guaranteed the right to vote, eliminated all discrimination in hotels, restaurants, and other public establishments. This was a politically dangerous move for Kennedy, because he knew that he did not have the votes necessary to pass the legislation because of the Southern filibuster.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., decided that if there was any hope of the bill passing, President Kennedy needed a large event to advocate for the passage of the Civil Rights Act. The idea of the far reaching “March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom” was planned. President Kennedy was worried that it would turn violent, and not attain the success that was needed to put the legislation to a vote.



*Kennedy meets with leaders of the March on Washington at the White House, August 28, 1963. Whitney Young, National Urban League; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Christian Leadership Conference; John Lewis, Student nonviolence Coordinating Committee, partially obscured; Rabbi Joachim Prinz, American Jewish Congress; Dr. Eugene P. Donnelly, National Council of Churches; A. Philip Randolph, AFL-CIO, Kennedy; Walter Reuther, United Auto Workers; Vice President, Lyndon B. Johnson, partially obscured, and Roy Wilkins, NAACP.*

The March on Washington, took place on August 28, 1963. It turned out to be one of the most ground breaking achievements of the 1960s, and provided momentum for the passage of the bill. It is estimated that approximately 250,000 people attended; 80% of the participants were African Americans. This was where the classic “I Have a Dream” speech was first delivered to the world. President Kennedy, however ran out of time to finish what he started; less than 90 days after the March on Washington, on November 22, 1963; he was assassinated in Dallas, TX. He did, however leave his energy in the halls of Washington. It would fall on his successor-President Lyndon Baines Johnson to pick up the torch and continue his efforts to pass the encompassing legislation, more commonly known as the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

## The Minister and the Teacher

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character,”

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., American Minister and Civil Rights Activist**

“If government is to serve any purpose it is to do for others what they are unable to do for themselves.”

**Lyndon Baines Johnson, 36th U.S. President  
August 27, 1908-January 22, 1973**

**Presidential Term: November 22, 1963 – January 20, 1969**

Five days after the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, President Lyndon Baines Johnson addressed the nation, and affirmed that he was pursuing the late President’s agenda. He stated that the highest honor that could be given to John F. Kennedy would be to secure the passage of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964. Johnson forced the bill forward; it passed the House of Representatives on February 10, 1964, with a 290-130 final vote count.





President Johnson with Senator Richard Russell in the White House, Dec. 7, 1963. Russell led a 54 day filibuster against the Civil Rights Bill before the bill was passed on the Senate floor in June 1964.



President Johnson signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. appears in the photo standing behind Johnson among politicians and civil rights activists.



President Johnson gives Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the pen he used to sign the Voting Rights Act of 1965

After a 54 day filibuster, led by Senator Richard Russell, (GA); to prevent the bill from being brought to a vote in the Senate; it passed with a 73-27 vote count on June 19, 1964. On July 2, 1964, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was signed into law by President Johnson. The Act outlaws discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, and later amended to include sexual orientation, as well as gender identity.

Johnson and King developed a personal relationship, and talked on a regular basis about civil rights issues; they shared many phone calls, and White House visits to discuss the best ways to attain racial equality. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was created out of these many conversations. African Americans would not be subjected to discrimination on the ability to vote due to race, poll taxes, and the application of literacy tests. It is considered by historians as the most effective civil rights law ever signed, because Africans Americans now had the right to vote. The Voting Rights Act was signed into law on August 6, 1965; King and Rosa Parks were present. After signing the Act into law, President Lyndon Baines Johnson gave the pen to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

## The Teacher

Towards the end, the **teacher** was left alone to continue, and expand on the good work that the **minister**, and the **journalist** had conceptualized and initiated.

“We must open the doors of opportunity, but we must also equip our people to walk through those doors.”

**Lyndon Baines Johnson, 36th U.S. President**

“None of us got where we are solely by pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps. We got here because somebody – a parent, a teacher, an Ivy League crony or a few nuns – bent down, and helped us pick up our boots.”

**Thurgood Marshall, First African American Supreme Court Justice**

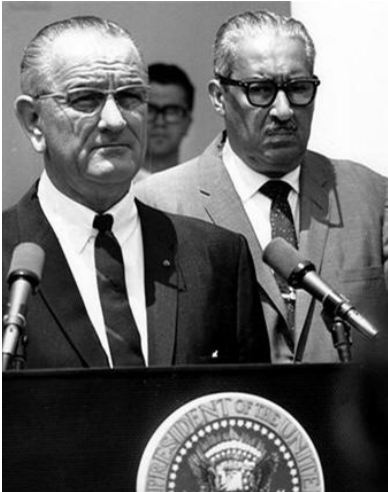
On June 13, 1967, President Lyndon Baines Johnson nominated Thurgood Marshall, to the Supreme Court to fill the seat of retiring U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice, Tom Clark. When he announced his choice he said: “it is the right thing to do, the right time to do it, the right man, and the right place.”

A heated debate took place on the Senate floor, on August 30, 1967, but he was confirmed by a vote count of 69-11. On October 2, 1967, he was sworn in by Chief Justice Earl Warren. Thurgood Marshall, a great grandson of slaves, rejected by the University of Maryland Law School, and a Howard University Law School, (HBCU), graduate became the first African American to sit on the nation's highest court.

Before Marshall was nominated for a seat on the US Supreme Court, he had a stellar career as a lawyer, and judge.







Thurgood Marshall stands behind President Johnson at the White House on June 13, 1967, as the President announces he is nominating Marshall to serve on the Supreme Court

He was Chief Counsel for the NAACP from 1938 to 1961. Marshall won 29 out of the 32 cases before the high tribunal; one of these cases included a historic victory in 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education*.

In 1961, President Kennedy, nominated Marshall for a seat on the US Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit. A group of southern Senators, led by James Eastland, (MS); the Judiciary Committee Chairman, held up the confirmation, and required Marshall to serve for the first several months under a recess appointment. In 1965, Marshall left to become Solicitor General in President Johnson's justice department. He won 14 out of the 19 cases he argued for the federal government.

After King's Assassination on April 4, 1968 in Memphis TN, President Johnson continued the good work that both Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and President Kennedy, had conceptualized and initiated; he signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, on April 11, 1968, one week after King's assassination. This was the last major

piece of legislation that he, and King had been working on. It expanded on previous Acts, and made it against the law to discriminate on the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, and national origin, it was expanded to include sexual orientation in 1974. In 1988 it was once again expanded to include the protection of people with disabilities, and families with children.



Thurgood Marshall being sworn in as the first African American Supreme Court Justice; October 2, 1967



President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1968, on April 11, 1968; 2 days after the funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In conclusion, The Civil Rights Movement effectively ended with the assassination of the 39 year old Baptist minister, on April 4, 1968. The minister, the journalist, and the teacher made bold, impactful, and historic decisions. Collaboratively and heroically; they changed the landscape of the United States of America, and the world.

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of convenience and comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., American Minister and Civil Rights Activist** 🌐

## The Talk

### Women and Covid-19

*“You must know that you can do this. You are strong, and you will make it. Just hang on and keep believing in yourself, always.” –Heather A. Stillufsen, Illustrator and Author*

#### **Women are facing a national crisis, and lost more jobs than men in 2020.**

Women ended 2020 with 5.4 million fewer jobs than they held in February, before the pandemic began. Meanwhile, men lost 4.4 million jobs over that same time period.

Before the pandemic women made up 46% of the US workforce but have endured 54% of all job losses during Covid-19. For millions of women the transition in the workplace due to Covid-19 has been seamless and effortless. Collectively, however this once in a lifetime pandemic has wreaked havoc on women's lives and livelihood. The Bureau of Labor and Statistics reported that in December 2020, 140,000 people lost their jobs... **all of them were women**. According to CNN, women lost 156,000 jobs while men gained 16,000.

Vice President, Kamala Harris has stated that since the beginning of the pandemic 2.5 million women have left the workforce, and this constituted a national emergency. In this article we are going to summarize 2 of those reasons; layoffs/furloughs, and an increase in household demands. The statistics for African American and Latina women are worse.

One of the main reasons that African American and Latina women have fared worse is because unfortunately these demographics hold most of the jobs that cannot be performed remotely. An analysis by McKinsey, demonstrates that collectively women hold occupations that are 19% more at risk than those held by men. Women participate in 3 out of the 4 occupations that have been negatively affected by the pandemic; 54% in hospitality, and food service, 43% in retail and wholesale trade, and 45% in the arts, recreation, and public administration.

Let's take a look at the numbers and the story they tell.

- For white workers, the unemployment rate fell to 5.6% in February. But for African American and Latino workers, reported jobless rates were 9.9% and 8.5%, respectively.
- According to the New York State Department of Labor when the data is adjusted for people who have stopped looking for work; the statistics are worse.
  - Women overall, 8.8%
  - African American Women, 14.1 %
  - Latina Women, 13.1%
- Employment for African American women is 9.7% lower than it was in February 2020. Employment for White men, White women, and African American men is down 5%, 5.4% and 5.9%, respectively.

In addition, to the economic and gender disparities in the workforce there is an additional reason for women leaving the workforce; an increase in household responsibilities. Women have experienced an average increase of 3 extra hours in daily chores and family demands; weekends are not excluded.

As the McKinsey podcast has cleverly stated, women have become Chief Disinfectant Officers, Chief Virtual School Officers, and personal chefs to our children; we are caregivers, wives, moms, daughters, personal shoppers and Lead Telehealth Appointment Schedulers for ourselves and family members. At the end of the day we are responsible for the successful management of the household.

In addition, C. Nicole Mason, President and CEO of the Institute for Women's Policy Research, stated “That the sectors most impacted by Covid-19 are less likely to have flexibility, when women can't come to work because of caregiving responsibilities — they have to exit the workforce.”

Statistics provide more clarity as we look deeper into the increase of daily demands. There are differences; especially, when we consider race, ethnicity, and the number and type of dependents in the household. All of



these factors play a crucial role. A study by McKinsey illustrated that 57% of White respondents said that their daily domestic, and caregiving demands had increased. 71% of African Americans, 74% of Latinos, and 79% of Asian respondents showed that they had experienced an increase in daily household demands. The disparities were experienced due to the multigenerational makeup of the household. In other words, households that had **both** children, and elderly dependents living in the home experienced the most increase in household chores and demands. The age of the school age child also play a role; the younger the child, the more women have to wear their “Chief Virtual School Officer” hat. Women share the brunt of societal responsibilities, and Covid-19 has brought this to the forefront as never before. Who provides most of the many, and varied caregiving duties to **both** children and the elderly? Women.

In conclusion, the impact that Covid-19 has had on women has been worse than with any other demographic group; especially African American and Latina women; the recovery for women of color has been more sluggish, and its impact will be felt for years. As we head towards herd immunity, and economic recovery, we must keep in mind that the recovery has been unequal. It could take years for the declines of this magnitude to recover, because even at its fastest rate, women’s labor force participation rarely increased by more than 1% per year.

**Breathe: This Too Shall Pass!**  
Ronda Knuth, Author 

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## Today in IT

*“Every once in a while, a new technology, an old problem, and a big idea turn into an innovation.”*  
Dean Kamen, American Engineer

Most studies indicate that facial recognition algorithms may unconsciously promote racial, gender and age related biases. According to McKinsey Global Institute, the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) in sensitive areas, has stirred a debate about bias and fairness. Yet human decision making in these and other domains can also be flawed, shaped by individual and societal biases that are often unconscious. Will AI’s decisions be less biased than human ones? Or will AI make these problems worse? The article that follows explores how bias in AI, may affect our everyday lives.

## The Role of Bias in Artificial Intelligence

*By Steve Forbes, Forbes Council Member-Forbes Technology Council*

Artificial intelligence (AI) has evolved exponentially, from driverless vehicles to voice automation in households, and is no longer just a term from sci-fi books and movies. The future of artificial intelligence comes sooner than the projections that were seen in the futuristic Minority Report film. AI will become an essential part of our lives in the next few years, approaching the level of super-intelligent computers that transcend human analytical abilities. Imagine opening your car by coming near it or getting products delivered to your place via drones; AI can make it all a reality.

However, recent discussions about the algorithmic bias reflect the loopholes in the “so perfect” AI systems. The lack of fairness that results from the performance of a

computer system is algorithmic bias. In algorithmic bias, the lack of justice mentioned comes in different ways but can be interpreted as one group’s prejudice based on a particular categorical distinction.

Human bias is an issue that has been well researched in psychology for years. It arises from the implicit association that reflects bias we are not conscious of and how it can affect an event’s outcomes. Over the last few years, society has begun to grapple with exactly how much these human prejudices, with devastating consequences, can find their way through AI systems. Being profoundly aware of these threats and seeking to minimize them is an urgent priority when many firms are looking to deploy AI solutions. Algorithmic bias in AI systems can take varied

forms such as gender bias, racial prejudice and age discrimination.

The critical question to ask is: What is the root cause for introducing bias in AI systems, and how can it be prevented? In numerous forms, bias may infiltrate algorithms. Even if sensitive variables such as gender, ethnicity or sexual identity are excluded, AI systems learn to make decisions based on training data, which may contain skewed human decisions or represent historical or social inequities.

The role of data imbalance is vital in introducing bias. For instance, in 2016, Microsoft released an AI-based conversational chatbot on Twitter that was supposed to interact with people through tweets and direct messages. However, it started replying with highly offensive and racist messages within a few hours of its release. The chatbot was trained on anonymous public data and had a built-in internal learning feature, which led to a coordinated attack by a group of people to introduce racist bias in the system. Some users were able to inundate the bot with misogynistic, racist and anti-Semitic language. This incident was an eye-opener to a broader audience of the potential negative implications of unfair algorithmic bias in the AI systems.

Facial recognition systems are also under scrutiny. The class imbalance is a leading issue in facial recognition software. A dataset called “Faces in the Wild,” considered the benchmark for testing facial recognition software, had data that was 70% male and 80% white. Although it might be good enough to be used on lower-quality pictures, “in the wild” is a highly debatable topic.

Concerns are arising as to how to test facial recognition technologies transparently. On June 30, 2020, the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) in New York City called for the cessation of private and government use of facial recognition technologies due to “clear bias based on ethnic, racial, gender and other human characteristics.” The ACM said that the bias caused “profound injury, particularly to the lives, livelihoods and fundamental rights of individuals in specific demographic groups.” Due to the pervasive nature of AI, it is crucial to address the algorithmic bias issues to make the systems more fair and inclusive.


Apart from algorithms and data, researchers and engineers developing these systems are also responsible for AI bias. According to VentureBeat, a Columbia University study found that “the more

homogenous the [engineering] team is, the more likely it is that a given prediction error will appear.” This can create a lack of empathy for the people who face problems of discrimination, leading to an unconscious introduction of bias in these algorithmic-savvy AI systems.

The hidden use of AI systems in our society can be dangerous for marginalized people. Consequently, people don’t have the option to opt out of these AI systems’ biased surveillance. Countries like the U.S. and China have deployed thousands of cameras, and the AI-enabled cameras track the movements of the people without their consent. It undermines those discriminated against, and it can also mitigate individuals’ willingness to partake in the economy and culture.

By promoting distrust and delivering distorted outcomes, it lowers the potential of AI for industry and society. Company and corporate executives need to ensure that human decision-making is strengthened by the AI technologies they use. They are responsible for supporting scientific advancement and standards that can minimize AI bias.

Joy Buolamwini, a postgraduate researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, realizes the repercussions of algorithmic bias in our society, and to address it, she founded the Algorithmic Justice League. The organization’s primary goal is to highlight the social and cultural implications of AI bias using art and scientific research. The work of such organizations will be monumental in addressing obscure issues like AI bias. Along with scientific researchers, governments have to join forces to address the AI bias problem toward a more progressive and fair society.

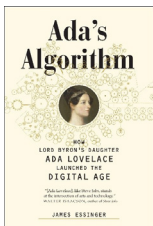
Finally, in seeking to explain AI and science in general, one must determine the global societal complexities because most of the fundamental transition emerges at the social level. 

## First Ladies Club

*"Nevertheless, She Persisted"*

Quote is inspired by the actions of the first woman senator from Massachusetts-**Elizabeth Warren**, on the Senate Floor: **February 7, 2017**

**A standing ovation, and a round of applause to all of the pioneering FIRST LADIES who have opened doors, broken the ceiling and paved our way!**



### Ada Lovelace

Born: December 10, 1815;  
Died: November 27, 1852  
Regarded as one of the first women computer programmers



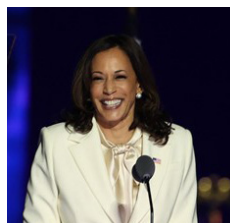
### Kalpana Chawla

Born: July 1, 1961;  
Died: February 1, 2003 (age 40)  
aboard Space Shuttle Columbia over Texas  
First Indian Woman Astronaut



### Alexa Irene Canady, MD

Born: November 7, 1950  
First African American Woman Neurosurgeon



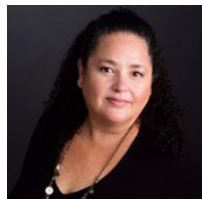
### Kamala Harris

Born: October 20, 1964  
First African American, and Asian American Woman, District Attorney from California, US Senator from California, and US Vice President



### Bachendri Pal

Born: May 24, 1954  
First Indian Woman to Reach the Summit of Mount Everest



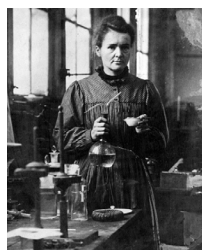
### Liz Balmaseda

Born: January 17, 1959  
First Latina to Win a Pulitzer Prize in the Category of Commentary



### Golda Meir

Born: May 3, 1898;  
Died: December 8, 1978  
First and Only Woman Prime Minister of Israel



### Marie Curie

Born: November 7, 1867;  
Died: July 4, 1934  
First Woman to win a Nobel Prize;  
First Woman and Only Person to Win 2 Nobel Prizes in 2 Different Fields; Physics and Chemistry



### Indira Gandhi

Born: November 19, 1917;  
Assassinated: October 31, 1984  
First and Only Woman Prime Minister of India



### Sonia Sotomayor

Born: June 25, 1954  
First Latina to become Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States



### Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

Born: July 15, 1952  
First Latina to Serve in Congress



### Ursula Burns

Born: September 20, 1958  
First African American Woman CEO of a Fortune 500 Company-Xerox

**"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world."**

**Harriet Tubman, American Abolitionist**



## Health Awareness Corner

*“Eat healthily, sleep well, breathe deeply, move harmoniously.” –Jean-Pierre Barral, Author*

### Colon Cancer

March was National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Get Screened. Regular screening tests for cancer can improve and save your life. Screening tests can find cancer early when it may be easier to treat.

Colon cancer is a type of cancer that begins in the large intestine (colon). The colon is the final part of the digestive tract.

Colon cancer typically affects older adults, though it can happen at any age. It usually begins as small, noncancerous (benign) clumps of cells called polyps that form on the inside of the colon. Over time some of these polyps can become colon cancers.

Polyps may be small and produce few, if any, symptoms. For this reason, doctors recommend regular screening tests to help prevent colon cancer by identifying and removing polyps before they turn into cancer.

If colon cancer develops, many treatments are available to help control it, including surgery, radiation therapy and drug treatments, such as chemotherapy, targeted therapy and immunotherapy.

Colon cancer is sometimes called colorectal cancer, which is a term that combines colon cancer and rectal cancer, which begins in the rectum.

### The Risk of Colon Cancer is Higher in African Americans

Colorectal cancer disproportionately affects the African American community, where the rates are the highest of any racial/ethnic group in the US. African Americans are about 20% more likely to get colorectal cancer and about 40% more likely to die from it than any other groups.

The reasons for the differences are complex, but they largely reflect differences in risk factors and in health care access, both of which are related to socioeconomic status. They often experience greater obstacles to cancer prevention, detection, treatment, and survival, including systemic racial disparities that are complex and go beyond the obvious connection to cancer. These obstacles can include lower paying jobs and lack of (or less comprehensive) health insurance, lack of access to healthy and affordable foods, low-quality education and housing, as well as unsafe environments.

“Colorectal cancer is the second deadliest cancer in the country,” said Durado Brooks, M.D., Vice President of

Prevention and Early Detection at the American Cancer Society. This disease is ravaging the African American community, and it is as important as ever that everyone has access to and is receiving the recommended screenings. Even during the coronavirus pandemic, necessary screening tests remain available to prevent the disease or find it at an early, more treatable stage.

### Colon Cancer is Increasing Among Younger People

The recent passing of Chadwick Boseman, the talented actor best known for his portrayal of the superhero Black Panther, at the age of 43 came as a surprise and shock to many. For a seemingly healthy, relatively young man to die from colorectal cancer seems almost incomprehensible.

But while colorectal cancer isn't as common in people under the age of 50 as it is in older people, it's not as uncommon as many people might think. In 2020, about 12% of colorectal cancers – about 18,000 cases – were diagnosed in people under the age of 50 in the US. Rates of colorectal cancer have been falling in older age groups in recent years, they've actually been rising among younger people.

### Signs and symptoms of colon cancer include:

- A persistent change in your bowel habits, including diarrhea or constipation or a change in the consistency of your stool
- Rectal bleeding or blood in your stool
- Persistent abdominal discomfort, such as cramps, gas or pain
- A feeling that your bowel doesn't empty completely
- Weakness or fatigue
- Unexplained weight loss

Many people with colon cancer experience no symptoms in the early stages of the disease. When symptoms appear, they'll likely vary, depending on the cancer's size and location in your large intestine.

### When to see a doctor

If you notice any persistent symptoms that worry you, make an appointment with your doctor.

Talk with your doctor about when to begin colon cancer screening. Guidelines generally recommend that colon cancer screenings begin around 50. Your doctor may recommend more frequent or earlier screening if you have other risk factors, such as a family history of the disease.

## Kidney Cancer

March was also National Kidney Cancer Awareness Month. It's among the 10 most common cancers in both men and women in the United States.

Kidney cancer is cancer that begins in the kidneys. Your kidneys are two bean-shaped organs, each about the size of your fist. They're located behind your abdominal organs, with one kidney on each side of your spine.

In adults, renal cell carcinoma is the most common type of kidney cancer. Other less common types of kidney cancer can occur. Young children are more likely to develop a kind of kidney cancer called Wilms' tumor.

The incidence of kidney cancer seems to be increasing. One reason for this may be the fact that imaging techniques such as computerized tomography (CT) scans are being used more often. These tests may lead to the accidental discovery of more kidney cancers. Kidney cancer is often discovered at an early stage, when the cancer is small and confined to the kidney.

### Kidney Cancer and Racial Disparities

The prognosis of kidney cancer in African Americans is worse when compared to White patients suffering from renal cell carcinoma (RCC), the most common form of invasive kidney cancer.

In a recent study at the National Cancer Institute and published in the Cancer journal, researchers found that African-Americans tend to have a poorer 5-year survival rate than Whites regardless of clinical data and patient demographics. "There is a consistent disparity between the races," said Wong-Ho Chow, Ph.D., professor in MD Anderson's Department of Epidemiology and lead investigator on the study.

In this study, clinical data and demographics of nearly 40,000 RCC patients diagnosed over a 15-year period from 12 registries in the National Cancer Institute's Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results (SEER) program, were analyzed.

The study revealed the 5-year relative survival rate for Whites diagnosed with invasive kidney cancer was 72.6% as compared to 68% for African-Americans regardless of age, sex, tumor size or stage, type of RCC and surgical procedures performed. SEER data also showed a poorer survival rate among men and older patients as compared to women and younger patients. Although research has shown an increase in risk of renal cell carcinoma when linked to hypertension, which disproportionately affects African-Americans, Chow notes that the study did not have appropriate data to

investigate if high blood pressure may have contributed to the racial disparity in survival after cancer diagnosis.

The findings suggest that African-Americans not only have higher incidence rates of RCC, but also lower survival rates after RCC diagnosis.

RCC, the most common type of kidney cancer in adults and the most deadly cancer among urological tumors, affects more than 30,000 men and women every year in the United States.

Although African-Americans tend to be diagnosed with papillary RCC, which is a subtype of kidney cancer associated with a better survival rate as compared to clear cell RCC - a subtype of RCC more commonly diagnosed in Whites - they were still at a disadvantage when it comes to survival.

The study also revealed that Whites have a survival advantage over African-Americans in all categories except for the patients who didn't have surgical removal of the kidney. In fact, both racial groups had an equally poor prognosis of survival and were worse off than patients who had surgical procedures.


Chow noted that differences in access to health care and delayed tumor diagnosis do not appear to be the reason for the disparities as African-Americans were more likely to be diagnosed at the localized stage, and disadvantages for this racial group occurred across all tumor sizes and stages.

"A clear explanation for the disparity is not known. More research is needed to investigate reasons for the racial disparity in renal cell cancer survival," Chow noted. "We should note that survival is best in all patients when the cancer is caught early when it can be effectively removed by surgery."

### Symptoms

Kidney cancer usually doesn't have signs or symptoms in its early stages. In time, signs and symptoms may develop, including:

- Blood in your urine, which may appear pink, red or cola colored
- Pain in your back or side that doesn't go away
- Loss of appetite
- Unexplained weight loss
- Tiredness
- Fever

Make an appointment with your doctor if you have any persistent signs or symptoms that worry you. 

## Holiday Alcove

*"Holidays-any holiday-are such a great opportunity to focus on bringing the family together."  
Lidia Bastianich, Celebrity Chef*

### Dominican Republic Independence Day Saturday, February 27

The island of the Dominican Republic commemorates its independence from Haiti on February 27, 1844. The Dominican Republic's Carnival is celebrated every year during the entire month of February, culminating with the largest celebration on Independence Day, February 27. The Dominican carnival is a huge festivity in which the people gather in public spaces and streets to celebrate, express and transform themselves. Historically, the church, local governors, and slave owners encouraged celebrations like this in Hispaniola, as a way to release pent up pressures. They would release the slaves and allow the poor people to have their carnivals in order to prevent a revolt.



Between 1822 and 1844, the tradition of wearing costumes during religious festivities almost disappeared during the Haitian occupation. But it returned immediately when the country achieved its independence on February 27, 1844. Costumes were then no longer associated with religious celebrations, and evolved into actual carnivals, celebrated during the three days prior to Ash Wednesday. February was then established as the month of carnival in the Dominican Republic. Carnival is celebrated in most cities and towns in the main streets with major carnival events celebrated in La Vega, Santiago and the main capital, Santo Domingo. Among its main characteristics are its flashy costumes and loud music. Its main character called "El Diablo Cojuelo" is the carnival's leading personality. This "limping devil" wears a colorful cloaked suit adorned with small mirrors, rattles, ribbons, and cowbells, as a parody of the Spanish medieval knights. A mask with large horns covers the devil's face, as he carries a round whip or vejiga and goes along the parade route surprising distracted onlookers with a lash. The Dominican's cultural identity and creativity are on display throughout this vibrant month.



The Passover Seder Table

### Passover Saturday, March 27-Sunday, April 4

Passover, is a major Jewish holiday that occurs in the spring on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan. One of the biblically ordained Three Pilgrimage Festivals, Passover is traditionally celebrated in the Land of Israel for seven days and for eight days among many Jews in the Diaspora.

In the Bible, Passover marks the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egyptian slavery, when God "passed over" the houses of the Israelites during the last of the ten plagues. When the Temple in Jerusalem stood, the paschal lamb was offered and eaten on Passover eve, while the wave offering of barley was offered on the second day of the festival. Nowadays, in addition to the biblical prohibition of owning leavened foods for the duration of the holiday, the Passover Seder is one of the most widely observed rituals in Judaism.

The actual Seder meal is quite variable. Traditions among Ashkenazi Jews generally include gefilte fish (poached fish dumplings), matzo ball soup, brisket or roast chicken, potato kugel (somewhat like a casserole) and tzimmes, a stew of carrots and prunes, sometimes including potatoes or sweet potatoes.





*Celebrating the Holi Festival*

## Holi Day

**Sunday, March 28-Monday, March 29**

Holi is the ancient Hindu Festival of Love and also known as the Festival of Colors. The origins of Holi lie in ancient Hindu traditions where Holi was celebrated to mark the arrival of spring.

On the eve of the festival, large pyres are lit in many parts of India to signify the burning of evil spirits. People often throw wood, dried leaves and twigs into bonfires. On the day of Holi, entire streets and towns turn red, green and yellow as people throw colored powder into the air and splash them on others.

The emphasis of Holi rituals is on the burning of demoness Holika. On Holika Dahan, large bonfires are lit to mark

the occasion. A special puja (worship ritual), where people sing and dance around the fire, and walk around it three times also takes place. In some parts of India, people even walk across the hot coals of the fire! Such fire walking is considered to be sacred. One place where it happens is Saras village near Surat in Gujarat.

The destruction of Holika is mentioned in the Hindu text, the Narada Purana. Holika's brother, the demon King Hiranyakashyap, apparently wanted her to burn his son, Prahlad, because he followed Lord Vishnu and didn't worship him. Holika sat with Prahlad in her lap, in the burning fire, because it was thought that no fire could harm her. However, Prahlad survived because his devotion to Lord Vishnu protected him. Holika was instead charred to death.

There aren't any religious rituals to be performed on the main day of Holi. It's simply a day for having fun!




## Easter

**Sunday, April 4**

Easter or Resurrection Sunday is a movable festival, and holiday observing the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, described in the New Testament as having occurred on the third day after his burial following his crucifixion. It is the conclusion of the Passion of Jesus, preceded by Lent (or Great Lent), a 40-day period of fasting, prayer, and penance.

The Easter lily, a symbol of the resurrection, traditionally decorates the chancel area of churches on this day. Other customs that have also become connected with Easter, and are observed by both Christians and some non-Christians include egg hunting, the Easter Bunny, and Easter parades.

From Easter egg traditions to chocolate bunnies to family gatherings, Easter is a major holiday for Christians all over the world, and is celebrated in approximately 95 countries across the world. 

## Noteworthy Days

*"Life is a canvas. Every action or ours is a stroke of paint and at the end, how beautiful our painting is will depend upon all of our strokes, all our actions." –Unknown*

It was very difficult to choose from the many noteworthy days sent to us every month, but we were finally able to narrow the list.



**January 11—Human Trafficking Awareness Day—** Human Trafficking Awareness Day is dedicated to raising awareness of sexual slavery and human trafficking worldwide. Today, there are between 21-30 million people enslaved in the world, more than at any time in human history. Human Trafficking Awareness Day seeks to end this slavery, return rights to individuals and make the world a safer place for all inhabitants.



**January 18—Martin Luther King Jr. Day—** Martin Luther King Day celebrates life and accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. MLK promoted Civil Rights through nonviolent civil disobedience. He is perhaps best known for his “I have a dream...” speech in 1963. He was assassinated in 1968.



**Feb 1-28—Black History Month—** Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans. Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month




**Feb 20— World Day of Social Justice**—Seeks to raise awareness about social justice. The U.N defines social justice as an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within nations. This day aims to highlight the importance of social justice by promoting gender equality and the rights of indigenous peoples. It also aims to remove barriers that people may face involving their age, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.



**March 1—Zero Discrimination Day—** Zero Discrimination Day aims to celebrate individuality, inclusion and human rights while promoting tolerance, compassion and peace. Discrimination refers to the selective practice of unfairly treating a person or a group of people differently than others due to factors such as religion, gender, race, sexuality, age, or disability. Despite laws and education, discrimination continues to be a wide-spread problem throughout the world.



**March 8—International Women’s Day—** International Women’s Day seeks to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of women throughout the world. This day aims to promote women’s equality by showing appreciation for women and by encouraging support for repressed women. 





## CARISK CAFÉ

*"If you really want to make a friend, go to someone's house and eat with him...the people who give you their food give you their heart."*

*Cesar Chavez, American Civil Rights Activist*

The Carisk Café is proud to announce its new menu developed by internationally renowned culinary consultants. Marybeth has chosen delicacies straight from the shores of Italy. Grace indulged us with the flavors of the Dominican Republic. Michael complemented our ever expanding menu with a secret family recipe. Anabel paid homage to her Cuban-Jamaican heritage. Sunita treated us with an Indian delight, and we also included favorites from our very own USA.

Due to its tremendous success, The Carisk Café is currently booked solid until June 29, but please feel free to visit our site, preview our menu, and we will gladly add you to our waiting list for summer reservations.

**MIAMI CHIC ATTIRE PLEASE** 🤗🌐

Carisk Cafe: [Click Here](#)

- Sharepoint
- CBH Collaboration Center
- HR
- Recipes of the Carisk Café
- Spring 2021



## Closing Thoughts

A special thank you to everyone that has made the Spring Edition of the Carisk Kaleidoscope possible; it is simply great fun to take all of the individual ideas/perspectives, and frame them into one great message. If there is anything that you would like to see in future editions please feel free to reach out.

There is always an open invitation to join the Council. Have a great, safe and happy spring season. See you on *Togetherness Tuesday*, June 29. 🌐



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*"The joy of reading is universal", Unknown*

### Excellence In Diversity

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