



## DIVERSITY COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT

*There are over 330 million people in the United States of America and everyone is diverse in their own way. At Carisk, we celebrate everyone's uniqueness.*

*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.*

*Carisk Partners is proud of the diversity of its company's members, irrespective of genetic information, race, color, religion, age, sex, range of abilities, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, or veteran's status.*

*We will strive to do well by doing 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."*

*—Joseph Berardo, Jr., Chairman and CEO*

## Acknowledgments

Welcome to Carisk Kaleidoscope's 2022 winter edition. The Council wishes every Carisk Family member and their loved ones a wonderful, happy and safe holiday season with lots of laughter and amazing food. 2023 is starting on a high note as we welcome Michael Vialonga to the Council.

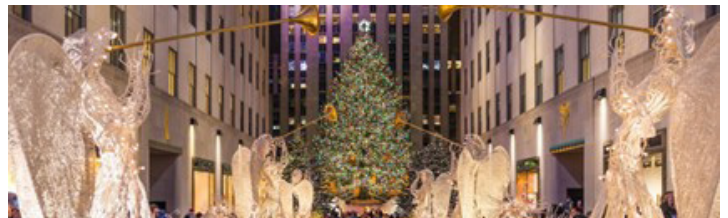
We have a great selection of interesting articles which address ongoing challenges in our society, featured in articles concentrating on the world of caregivers, the co-existence between disability and homelessness, as well as the dwindling life expectancy of Black men.

Bob's article on artificial intelligence became the focus of "The Talk", he also contributed to "In the News" addressing the historical returns of the 2022 midterm elections.

Our Poem, Positivity Poster and the quote at the end of the caregiver's article are courtesy of Diane, she also contributed towards Trailblazing Pioneers and Lights, Cameras, Action.

We continue with Allen's "Exceptional Women Series", featuring Anna May Wong, considered the first Chinese American movie star.

"What You Need to Know," courtesy of Michael R., highlights the importance of mental health and DEI in the workplace.



David expands the discussion on the importance of mental health in the workplace with the Surgeon General's report which can be found in our resource page.

Sports Corner brings us contributions from both Bob and Michael V.

For the 6th year in a row, David has organized our Hope for the Holidays campaign, which will last until Friday, January 6 @ 5 PM. Once again the Carisk Family has a great opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the vulnerable and less fortunate.

Thank you CK planning committee (Bob, Diane, Lori & Sunita), as well as all Council members for all of your collaborations which include our serious conversations, light hearted banter, comments and participation in our Council meetings. Great job by all. Happy Holidays and see you in 2023!!

Anabel

## Contents

Acknowledgments . . . . .	1	Positivity Poster . . . . .	13
To Forgive is Power. . . . .	2	In The News . . . . .	14
Members of the Diversity Council . . . . .	3	Celebrating Carisk's Diversity . . . . .	14
Welcome Alcove. . . . .	4	Noteworthy Days . . . . .	16
The Talk . . . . .	4	Trailblazing Groundbreakers . . . . .	18
Exceptional Women . . . . .	6	Lights, Cameras, Action! . . . . .	18
November is National Family Caregivers Month. . . . .	7	Diversity Poster. . . . .	19
International Day of Persons with Disabilities . . . . .	8	Sports Corner . . . . .	20
Coolio's 'Premature Death' Spotlights		Carisk Café . . . . .	21
The Dwindling Life Expectancy Of Black Men . . . . .	10	Resources. . . . .	22
What You Need to Know. . . . .	11		

## To Forgive is Power



To forgive is not to forget  
To forgive is really to remember  
That no one is perfect that each of us stumble  
That each of us say things we wish we had never said  
That we all forget that love is more important than being right  
To forgive is really to remember that we are so much more than our mistakes  
That we are often more kind and caring  
That accepting other's flaws can help us accept our own  
To forgive is to remember  
That the odds are pretty good that we might soon need to be forgiven ourselves  
That life sometimes gives us more then we can handle  
That there is a bright light at the end of the tunnel  
To forgive is to remember  
That we have room in our hearts to begin again and again, and again

Unknown-Modified by Diane Nicolo 

## 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



#### Jen Andrews

Executive Assistant  
Remote

"The beauty of the world lies in the diversity of its people." –Unknown



#### Sally Balioni

VP of Sales, CiC  
Wall, NJ

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



#### 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



#### Shannon Ehrola

Director, Brand Creative  
Wall, NJ

"The beauty of the world lies in the diversity of its people." –Unknown



#### Lori Height

Executive Sales Assistant  
Wall, NJ

Promoting a community of acceptance and belonging



#### 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

Vice President of Administration  
Remote

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



#### Robert Post

Senior Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Human Resources and Training  
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



#### Michele St. Preux

Provider Relations Coordinator  
Florham Park, NJ

"Our diversity is our strength. What a dull and pointless life it would be if everyone was the same." –Angelina Jolie



#### Michael Vialonga

Sales Associate  
Wall, NJ

"We cannot change the world, until we change ourselves." – Anonymous



#### David Vittoria

Chief Behavioral Health Officer  
Miami, FL

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



## Welcome Alcove

Carisk Partners welcomes our three new team members who have joined us between October and December, 2022. We wish them good luck for a great and long term working association; all the best in their new positions.

**Amanda Dennison and Lisa Bracken** are our newest Care Coordinators, reporting to Soirene Delgado (Amanda) and Kevin Glennon (Lisa), the Managers of Care Coordination. Both Lisa and Amanda are Registered Nurses who come to us from two of the largest Workers' Compensation managed care organizations, where they were RN Field Case Managers.

**Sydney White** is joining Carisk as the newest member of the Claims Entry staff, reporting to Rose Nelson, the Claims Supervisor. Before being hired, she worked at Carisk as a temporary employee.

Amanda, Lisa and Sydney best of luck to all of you and welcome to the Carisk Family! 🍀



## The Talk

Featuring topics on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion which trigger thought and conversation

**“The key to artificial intelligence has always been the representation.”**

—Jeff Hawkins, Neuroscientist

**We continue our discussion on artificial intelligence from Coded Bias, presented the summer of 2021.**

A stakeholder panel that the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) hosted in September was dominated by discussions related to smart technology, such as machine-learning recruitment systems used for hiring purposes. The meeting was intended for employers, attorneys and civil rights advocates to discuss topics for the agency to consider when drafting its new strategic enforcement plan (SEP).

The witnesses talked about pregnancy accommodations, sex-based caregiver discrimination and pay equity as issues to consider for the next SEP, which provides organizations with a roadmap of areas where they can expect increased scrutiny moving forward. But discussion of AI bias made up the bulk of the five-hour listening session.

“[We] urge the next SEPs to include a focus on the ways in which relying on algorithmic technology and artificial intelligence in hiring can replicate and systematize harmful and [stereotypical] decision-making while also making such discrimination more difficult to challenge because of the black-box nature of those decision-making processes,” said Emily Martin, vice president for education and workplace justice at the National Women’s Law Center.

Judy Conti, director for government affairs at the National Employment Law Project, said that automation tools are becoming increasingly common but are often programmed and trained based on past hiring practices that can replicate patterns of illegal bias.

“They search for indicators that supposedly correlate to job performance, but these indicators may well be built

©2022 Carisk Partners. Confidential.

This document and the information within are provided in confidence, and solely for the use of the recipient. It may not be reproduced, circulated, or disclosed to any third party, in whole or in part, without Carisk Partners’ written consent.

upon preconceived notions that embody implicit biases at their core and could filter out qualified candidates that don't fit a certain mold," she noted.

### AI Has Received Heavy Scrutiny

In 2019, [The Washington Post](#) reported that an algorithmic hiring system developed by Utah-based technology firm HireVue assessed over 1 million video job interviews. Its autonomous interview system asks questions of candidates, films their responses and then uses the video to assess candidates for various jobs based on an "employability" score, which factors in their "willingness to learn" and "personal stability." HireVue has since [stopped its facial analysis](#).



Meredith Whittaker, a co-founder of the AI Now Institute, a research center in New York, told [The Washington Post](#) that such algorithmic systems are «pseudoscience» and «a license to discriminate» against underrepresented candidates. But HireVue claims that it uses "world-class bias testing" techniques to prevent hiring discrimination.

In 2018, tech giant Amazon ditched an AI recruiting tool after discovering that [it discriminated against women](#). The algorithm was based on the number of resumes submitted over the past decade, most of whom were men. Therefore, it was trained to favor men over women.

And in 2022, the EEOC sued three integrated companies providing English-language tutoring services to students in China under the "iTutorGroup" brand, alleging that they programmed their online software [to automatically reject more than 200 older applicants](#).

Eve Hill, a disability rights attorney and partner at Brown Goldstein & Levy in Baltimore, said during the EEOC meeting that AI-based screening providers should teach and test the tools on large, documented, diverse datasets on an ongoing basis to ensure the results don't discriminate.

"Artificial intelligence-based discrimination is one of the things that is most frightening me right now," Hill said. "The employers using them often don't know how they work."

### AI Can Be an Effective Tool When Used Properly

Emily Dickens, chief of staff, head of government affairs and corporate secretary for the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), noted that nearly 80 percent of organizations polled in a recent survey used or planned to use AI for HR purposes within the next five years.

She also said that leveraging AI-based devices in HR isn't all bad. For example, algorithmic systems have transformed how businesses operate by reducing the time it takes to fill open positions. And nearly 3 in 5 organizations report that the quality of recruits is higher due to their use of AI.

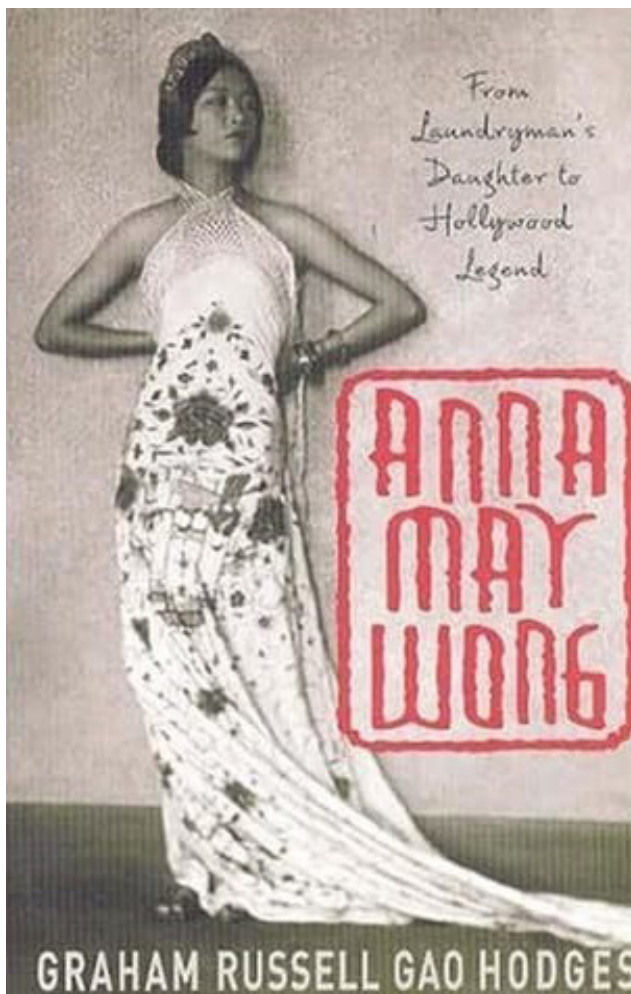
[A 2022 SHRM report](#) showed that AI can help eliminate unconscious bias by HR leaders, resulting in an increase in equal employment opportunities when done correctly.

"This is not the moment to impose heavy-handed regulatory restrictions that will set key HR functions back and impede the ability to create and identify talent pipelines," Dickens said.

Several witnesses praised the EEOC for its [Artificial Intelligence and Algorithmic Fairness Initiative](#), which ensures that AI is used fairly and consistently with federal laws. And some municipalities have set up regulations to combat AI-related workplace bias.

For example, [New York City passed a law](#) that will prohibit companies from using AI and algorithm-based technologies for recruiting, hiring or promotion without those tools first being audited by a third party for bias.

“As I look across the country in the last two or three years, almost every state is starting to look at AI and [create] a task force,” said Darrell Gay, partner at law firm ArentFox Schiff in Washington, D.C. “I would urge the EEOC [to create its] own task force in coordinating with the other agencies to kind of look at this in a systematic way across the country.”



## EXCEPTIONAL WOMEN

**The first thing to do is start and the second is to continue – Chinese Proverb**

Maya Angelou inaugurated this wonderful series in our 2022 spring edition; we continue with Anna May Wong. Wong Liu Tsong, known professionally as Anna May Wong, was an American actress, considered the first Chinese-American movie star in Hollywood, as well as the first Chinese-American actress to gain international recognition. Her varied career spanned silent film, sound film, television, stage, and radio.

To learn more about Anna May Wong, please copy and paste the link below in your browser for a 6 minute video.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rdjiMN\\_NSs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rdjiMN_NSs)



## November is National Family Caregivers Month

During National Family Caregivers Month, we recognize the love and sacrifice of more than 50 million Americans providing crucial care and medical assistance to parents, children, siblings, and other loved ones, ensuring their health and dignity.

### Caregiving in the United States

By AARP, National Alliance for Caregiving, May 14, 2020

Caregiving often calls us to lean into love we didn't know possible." — [Tia Walker, from The Inspired Caregiver: Finding Joy While Caring for Those You Love](#)

First conducted in 1997 by the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP, Caregiving in the U.S. 2020 update presents a portrait of unpaid family caregivers

This study highlights the varied experiences and situations of caregivers in the United States and points to the impacts many caregivers face as a result of their stepping up to help family and friends. Family and friends comprise the most basic unit of any society. For individuals who take on the responsibility of caring for another person through sickness or disability, it can often be challenging to see beyond the individual experience.



Today, more than one in five Americans (21.3 percent) are caregivers, having provided care to an adult or child with special needs at some time in the past 12 months. This totals an estimated 53.0 million adults in the United States, up from the estimated 43.5 million caregivers in 2015. The report highlights the nearly 48 million caregivers caring for someone over the age of 18. Key findings include:

- Nearly one in five (19%) are providing unpaid care to an adult with health or functional needs.
- More Americans (24%) are caring for more than one person up from 18% in 2015.
- More family caregivers (26%) have difficulty coordinating care up from 19% in 2015.
- More Americans (26%) are caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or dementia up from 22% in 2015.
- More Americans (23%) say caregiving has made their own health worse up from 17% in 2015.
- Family caregiving spans across all generations, including Boomers, Gen-X, Gen-Z, Millennials, and Silent.
- 61% of family caregivers are also working.

The following links provide insight on the diversity of caregivers.

#### Caregiving in the U.S. Profiles

[The "Typical" African American Caregiver](#) (PDF)

[The "Typical" Asian Caregiver](#) (PDF)

[The "Typical" Hispanic Caregiver](#) (PDF)

[The "Typical" LGBTQ Caregiver](#) (PDF)

[The "Typical" Gen X Caregiver](#) (PDF)

[The "Typical" Millennial Caregiver](#) (PDF)

[The "Typical" Student Caregiver](#) (PDF)

[The "Typical" High Intensity Caregiver](#) (PDF)

[The "Typical" No Choice Caregiver](#) (PDF)

[The "Typical" Feeling Alone Caregiver](#) (PDF)


[The "Typical" Caregiver of a Care Recipient Living in a Rural Area](#) (PDF)

Of special interest to many of us:

[Managing a Paid Job and Family Caregiving is a Growing Reality](#)

Interesting graphics enhance our report:

[Infographic](#) (PDF) & [Hispanic/Latino Infographic](#) (PDF)

Finally, we are reminded how much we need our family and close friends to keep going. As the U.S. continues to address this expanding situation, the need to recognize and support family caregivers as the cornerstone of society will only become more important. 

**IF YOU HAVE  
THE POWER TO  
MAKE SOMEONE  
HAPPY, DO IT.  
THE WORLD  
NEEDS MORE  
OF THAT.**

# International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Saturday, December 4, 2022

The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons was proclaimed in 1992, by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/3. The observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

The following article illustrates an additional challenge this vulnerable population is experiencing.

## A DISABILITY PROGRAM PROMISED TO LIFT PEOPLE FROM POVERTY. INSTEAD, IT LEFT MANY HOMELESS

*The federal Social Security Income Program is leaving many without monetary aid that matches inflation costs*

By [FRED CLASEN-KELLY](#)

After two months of sleeping in the Salvation Army Center of Hope homeless shelter, Margaret Davis has had no luck finding an apartment she can afford.

The 55-year-old grandmother receives about \$750 a month from the federal government. She's trying to live on just \$50 cash and \$150 in food stamps each month so she can save enough for a place to call home.

Davis is homeless even though she receives funds from the Supplemental Security Income program, a hard-to-get federal benefit that was created nearly 50 years ago to lift out of poverty Americans who are older, blind, or disabled.

Davis' job options are limited because she gets dialysis treatment three times a week for kidney failure. As she prepared to spend another night in the crowded shelter, she checked her phone to see whether a doctor wanted her to have her left leg amputated.

"My therapist is trying to help me stay positive but sometimes I just want to end this life and start over," Davis said.

Falling into homelessness is not a new issue for people who receive supplemental income from the Social Security Administration. But moving recipients out of shelters, crime-ridden motels, and tent encampments and into stable housing has been getting harder, according to nonprofit attorneys, advocates for people with disabilities, and academic researchers.

Rapidly rising rents and inflation deserve a share of the blame.

In a country where roughly [1 in 4 residents](#) live with some type of disability, supplemental income is meant to ensure that the most vulnerable can get housing and other basic needs. Most SSI recipients automatically qualify for Medicaid, a joint federal and state program that covers medical costs for people with low incomes.

In addition to people who are blind or who are 65 or older, those who prove they have a medical condition that prevents them from working for at least one year are eligible for a monthly payment from SSI, which maxes out at \$841. But there's a catch that makes seeing a better financial future difficult for people like Davis. The monetary benefit decreases if the person earns more than \$85 a month in additional income. And both the income and Medicaid benefits are revoked if the person saves more than \$2,000, which critics say discourages people from saving.

The amount that recipients receive has not kept pace with rising rent prices, advocacy groups say.

The amount of money Davis said she gets each month from the program is about \$60 more than the maximum amount offered 10 years ago, when she first started receiving the benefit. Yet the average apartment in Charlotte, where Davis lives, now rents for \$1,500 a month, about 70% more than it did nearly a decade ago, according to



A homeless encampment at Echo Park Lake during the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic (Araya Diaz/Getty Images)



Zumper, which has been tracking rental prices since 2014.

When Congress created SSI in 1972, the legislation promised that recipients “would no longer have to subsist on below-poverty-level incomes.”

Today, nearly 8 million people rely on the federal program for income.

Over the past five decades, Congress under both Republican and Democratic leadership has declined to make major changes to the program. The \$85 outside income limit, for instance, has never been adjusted to account for inflation.

The Social Security Administration, which oversees the program, did not respond to multiple requests for comment about how the rates are set.

For seven months, Delisa Williams has been stuck in the same homeless shelter as Davis. Diabetes, hypertension, and osteoporosis have left her body weakened, and the stress of living in the Salvation Army Center of Hope is taking a toll on her mental health.

Williams’ only real chance to get out had been the combined \$881 she got each month from SSI and the Social Security Disability Insurance program, which has similar limits and requirements. She quickly realized that would not be enough to afford the rent for most places.

“God will see me through,” she said. “He didn’t bring me this far for nothing.”

Among developed nations, the United States is one of the hardest places for people to meet the criteria for disability payments, according to [the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development](#), a global intergovernmental group the U.S. helped create to advance social well-being.

If a person applies for disability income, they can wait months or even years to get benefits. Thousands go broke or die while waiting for help. A [data analysis](#) by the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that from 2014 to 2019, about 48,000 people filed for bankruptcy while trying to get a final decision on a disability appeal. The same report said that from 2008 to 2019 more than 100,000 people died waiting.

The situation was made worse during the covid-19 pandemic because the Social Security Administration closed more than 1,200 field offices across the nation and kept them shuttered for roughly two years.

That decision left hundreds of thousands of needy people unable to seek benefits, since phone lines were jammed with calls and the agency provides no way to submit applications online, said David Weaver, a former associate commissioner for research, demonstration, and employment support at the Social Security Administration.

“The number of SSI awards just collapsed,” Weaver said.


Homeless shelters and other nonprofits often help clients apply for the supplemental income in hopes that the money will help get them a place to live. Rachael Mason, a social worker at the Triune Mercy Center in Greenville, South Carolina, has learned to temper people’s expectations.

“Any time someone shows up and says I want to pursue housing, my heart drops a little bit,” Mason said. “I have to be honest and tell them it could be a year to three years. Even if someone wants to just rent a room in a house, it could take up their entire check.”

As the 50th anniversary of SSI approaches this fall, Congress is deciding whether to make changes to the program.

A group of Republican and Democratic legislators have now proposed the [SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act](#), which would raise the asset limit for recipients from \$2,000 to \$10,000 for individuals and from \$3,000 to \$20,000 for couples.

Davis, the woman whose leg might be amputated, is trying to remain hopeful. She started seeing a therapist to cope with depression. She stopped smoking to save money for an apartment.

Asked when she might be able to move out of the shelter, she said, “I don’t know.” 

**“When life gets hard, try to remember: the life you complain about is  
only a dream to some people” – Anonymous**

## Coolio's 'Premature Death' Spotlights The Dwindling Life Expectancy Of Black Men

The rapper's death at 59 comes on the heels of other notable Black men dying at relatively young ages in recent years.

Written By [Bruce C.T. Wright @bctw](#)

Posted September 29, 2022

His unexpected death at the age of 59 has prompted an [outpouring of condolences](#) from fans of and within the Hip-Hop community. However, the pioneering west coast rapper dying Wednesday at the age of 59 has also sparked considerable concern not only about what appears to be the dwindling life expectancy of rappers but also the same apparent phenomenon for Black men in general.

[According to TMZ](#), which first announced Coolio's death, he died at a friend's house while using the restroom. Suspicions of cardiac arrest were the closest hint to what may have happened as officials ruled out foul play and confirmed no drugs or drug paraphernalia were found where he died.

To be sure, 59 years old is not young, per se — but it certainly isn't old. At least, not according to life expectancy statistics by race maintained by the federal government.

While the life expectancy rate for Black men, in particular, has been lowering, Coolio should have lived for at least another 12+ years, per information made public by the Environmental protection Agency (EPA) just last month.

Women in general have the highest life expectancy of all humans, with white women living the longest of everybody at more than 81 years. But when broken down along gender and racial lines, Black men are the lowest on the totem pole of life expectancy with an average age of barely more than 69 years.

Making these statistics even direr is the fact that life expectancy for all Americans is on the decline. Last year was the second consecutive year of that unfortunate truth during a time when Black people had the third-highest decline in life expectancy. Nearly one full year of living was shaved off of the life expectancy chart for Black people, falling "from 71.5 years in 2020 to 70.8 in 2021," according to [statistics from the Centers for Disease Control](#). It is the lowest life expectancy for Black people since 1995.

On an even more granular basis, life expectancy for Black men sits at just 68 years, according to [data from the Kaiser Family Foundation](#).

Compounding those grim statistics are the recent deaths of notable Black men like singer Jesse Powell (51), and comedian David A. Arnold (54). While Powell died from a heart attack and complications from hypertension, Arnold's cause of death has been listed as being natural causes.

Upon learning of Coolio's death on Wednesday night, Dr. Oni Blackstock — a physician who is also the founder and Executive Director of Health Justice, a racial and health equity consulting practice — drew attention on Twitter with a list of rappers who died younger than expected since 2020 in deaths that were not caused by gun violence.

They included Hip-Hop legends DMX (50), Biz Markie (57), Shock G (57), Prince Markie Dee (52) and MF DOOM (49).

Blackstock called it "premature death."

To be sure, Black Americans are living a lot longer than they did in the past.

Life expectancy is [based on several factors](#) like genetics, lifestyle choices, access to quality health care, hygiene, obesity, diet and nutrition, exercise, and crime rates. Black Americans face other factors like racial injustices and




Coolio performs on stage during Riot Fest 2022 at Douglass Park on September 18, 2022, in Chicago. | Source: Daniel Boczarski / Getty

post-disaster displacement that can affect life expectancy.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the average life expectancy in the U.S. was 47 years. By the year 2000, it had risen to over 70 years, with some Americans even exceeding 80 years of age. Black Americans also saw similar growth, but their life expectancy constantly stayed five to seven years lower than that of their white counterparts. By 2018 the difference in life expectancy between Black and whites in America had shrunk to a little over three and a half years and it continues to shrink.

In a recent study, [Brookings](#) compared life expectancy across neighborhoods where the population of Black residents ranged from less than 1% to over 50%. They found that neighborhoods with a 10% Black population or higher have an overall life expectancy lower than the national average of 78.7 years. But, neighborhoods with a Black population of less than 1% have a higher life expectancy by around one year compared to the national average.

In conclusion, even though the difference in life expectancy between Black and white Americans is shrinking, the disparity is still a serious cause of concern in Black communities. 

**“The greatest single challenge facing our globalized world is to combat and eradicate its disparities.”  
– Nelson Mandela, Former President of South Africa**

---

## “WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW”

### HOW A DEI FOCUS ENHANCES WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

*Getting a pulse on differences in employee perspectives around mental health could improve psychological safety in your organization.*

By: Raquel Moreno | November 11, 2022

Before we read this article, please remember that Carisk offers EAP and comprehensive mental health benefits through Cigna. Contact HR if you would like to have a better understanding of them. In addition, David Vittoria facilitates mental health wellbeing sessions when a situation warrants it; For example, the Covid lockdown, or when national tragedies occur such as the Buffalo and Uvalde shootings.



Addressing mental health in the workplace is a delicate matter at the best of times. Add on the pandemic and an economic roller coaster, and it's no surprise that mental illness continues to [grow](#) among U.S. adults.

Ensuring employees feel comfortable seeking support for their mental health can be further complicated by the impact of their ethnic and racial backgrounds.

[Research](#) conducted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and The Hartford revealed workers who identify as Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI), Black and Latinx are less likely than their white colleagues to broach the matter of mental health in their workplaces.

“It's important for leaders to appreciate that there are real differences across race and ethnicity when it comes to mental health concerns in the workplace,” said Susan Johnson, head of diversity, equity and inclusion at The Hartford.

#### Disparities in Perception

Before workplaces can become core access points for mental health support, employers will need to consider the effectiveness of their communication strategies.

The Hartford-NAMI study showed that 30% of the U.S. workforce would not turn to any workplace resource if they



needed mental health assistance. Privacy concerns, stigma and low awareness of employer offerings were cited among factors contributing to workers' reluctance to seek mental health support at work.

The study also showed AAPI (35%) and Black (32%) workers were more likely than white colleagues (21%) to agree that aspects of their identity make it or would make it hard to discuss mental health at work.

The study concluded that employees of different racial identities perceived some dynamics surrounding mental health differently:

- When asked whether their workplace **encourages dialogue about mental health**, around one-third of Black (33%) and Latinx (36%) workers agreed, while nearly half of AAPI (42%) and white (43%) workers did.
- Regarding the role of leadership **expressing empathy and genuine interest** in employees' lives, more than half of white respondents agreed, with 46% of Latinx workers, 44% of AAPI workers and 40% of Black workers in agreement.
- With respect to companies providing employees with **flexibility in work schedules to get help**, nearly half of white (48%) employees and around 40% of AAPI (and Latinx (39%) workers found this to be the case. Fewer Black workers (33%) found their places of employment to have this flexibility in place.

"Being the only — whether it's the only Black or the only Latinx, the only AAPI worker — can bring about its own challenges and stresses," Johnson said, including microaggressions, impostor syndrome, code-switching or bias.

### Empathy and Engagement

The Hartford-NAMI research showed there are impediments to robust and equitable mental health support and no one path to meeting the mental health needs of a diverse workforce.

Nonetheless, U.S. workers who participated in the study identified four key actions employers can take to foster empathy and increase engagement around mental health:

- Create a central, easily accessible hub for information about company-provided mental health resources.
- Communicate frequently and clearly about how to access help.
- Educate leadership about mental health conditions and resources while encouraging peer-to-peer support, such as programs by employee resource groups.
- Lean on nonprofits and community groups that offer mental health education and programs designed for identity and cultural dimensions.

The Hartford's strategy begins with its board and executive leadership, providing them the resources to understand how to bring about an inclusive environment, Johnson said. "And then we've got some terrific engagement and communications mechanisms through our employee resource groups."

In addition to an employee assistance program where staff receive support from trained professionals, Johnson has found the company's Courageous Conversation Circles (C3) to be helpful in engaging employees around matters that influence their emotional wellbeing.

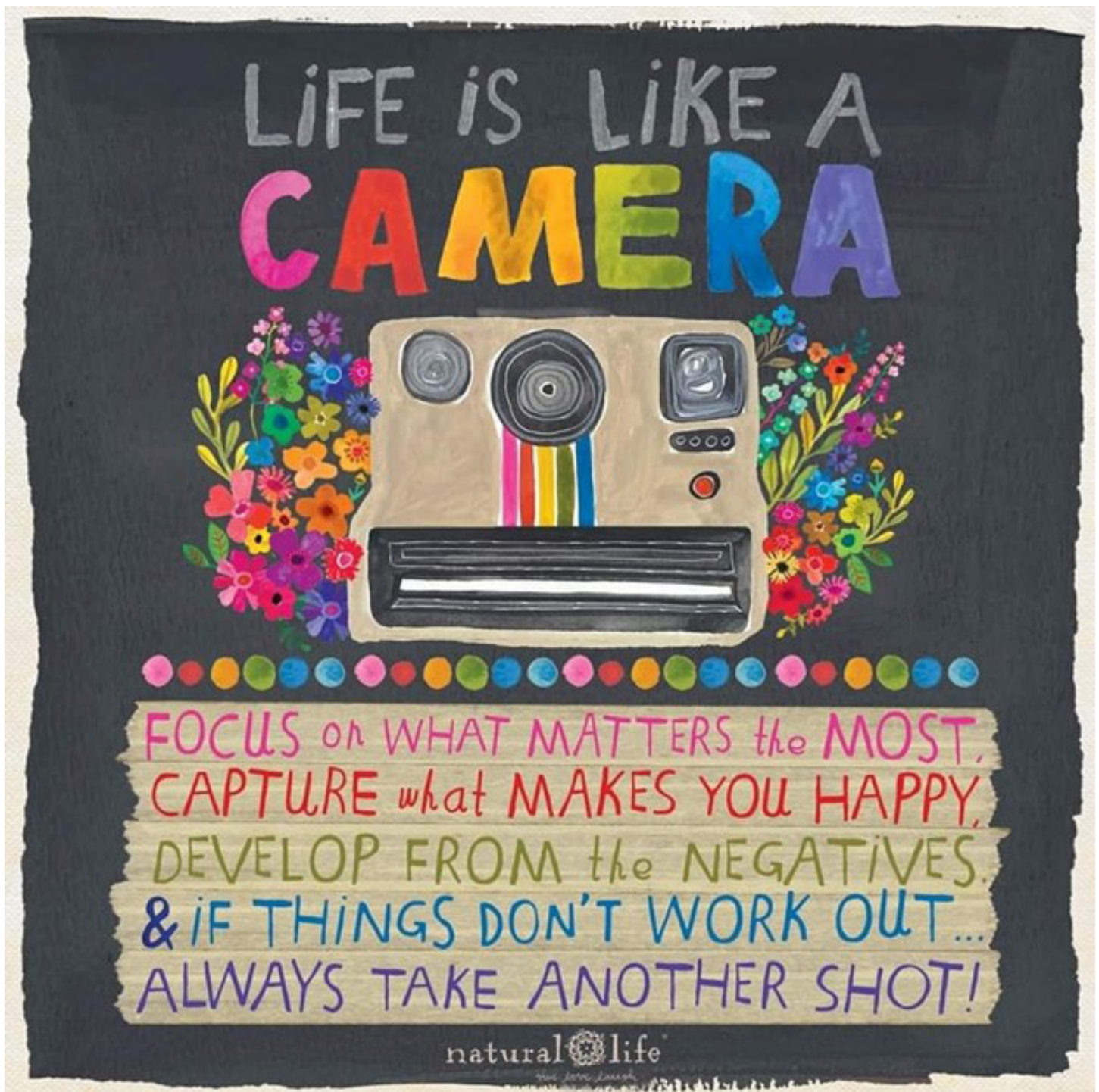
The Hartford describes C3s as "facilitated discussions that empower employees to discuss complex topics in a safe space, build trust and increase productivity." In 2021, the company held more than 400 conversations where thousands of employees "respectfully discussed topics such as age assumptions, gender bias, race and inclusive language." 🌐

**"It's important for leaders to appreciate that there are real differences across race and ethnicity when it comes to mental health concerns in the workplace."**

**Susan Johnson, head of diversity, equity and inclusion, The Hartford**



## Positivity Poster





## In The News

### National History Was Made by the 2022 Midterm Elections

[Candidates Who Reached Milestones in November](#)

[Muslim American Candidates and the 2022 Midterms](#)



## Celebrating Carisk's Diversity

**"Diversity is the essence of the word unique" – Bartleby.com**



### Diwali—Monday, October 24, 2022

Diwali is an ancient Hindu festival of lights, which represents the eternal triumph of light over darkness or the victory of good over evil. Diwali, which literally means row of lights in Hindi, is primarily celebrated in India. This celebration of light is India's most important holiday and marks the start of the New Year. Like many Indian festivals, Diwali celebrates different traditions and stories. One of the most popular stories celebrated by Diwali is the return of Lord Rama who had been exiled for 14 years. Diyas (lamps) are lit to guide and illuminate Lord Rama's path back to his Kingdom. Diwali also celebrates the Goddess Lakshmi: Hindu goddess of prosperity and wealth. Throughout the festival, daily and nightly rituals differ. Diwali night is a festive occasion where celebrants adorn in jewelry and new clothing to light Diya's and fireworks.



### Chanukah—Sunday, December 18-Monday, December 26, 2022

Chanukah is an eight day Jewish festival, also known as the festival of lights. On each day, a Menorah (an eight branched candelabra) is lit with an ascending number of candles to match the day. The reason for Chanukah is based on the story of the Maccabees battle with the Greeks. It is told that one pure bottle of olive oil lasted for eight days in the Holy Temple. It should have lasted only for the first day.





### Christmas—Sunday, December 25, 2022

Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. For modern Christians it also starts a 12-day Christmas season that begins on December 25th and ends on January 5th. Churches celebrate Christmas with services on Christmas Eve and often midnight masses. While the holiday is religious in origin, many cultures, even those without Christian ideologies, celebrate this holiday. This celebration often centers around Santa Claus, a mythical figure dressed in a red suit, based on Saint Nicholas. Tradition has it that on Christmas morning, Santa brings gifts for children who have been good and coal for those who have been naughty.



### Kwanza—Monday, December 26-Sunday, January 1, 2023

Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan African celebration of family, community, and culture. It is a week-long cultural festival from December 26th to January 1st. Kwanzaa was initially established to unite African Americans with their African roots and heritage. Nguzo Saba is a collection of seven principles that guide the holiday. They are central to Kwanzaa as a different principle is emphasized each day during the celebration. Celebrants often dress in traditional Pan-African clothing and decorate their homes with African artwork.



### Three Kings Day—Friday, January 6, 2023

For many Christians in Spain and Latin America, the holiday season officially ends on January 6, which is the 12th day of Christmas known as the Feast of the Epiphany, or Three Kings' Day. The holiday celebrates the biblical tale in which the Three Kings, or Three Wise Men, visit baby Jesus. The gifts the Three Kings gave Jesus were meant to be symbolic. Gold was associated with the belief that Jesus was the King of Jews. Frankincense, which is often burned in churches today, was meant to represent the divine nature of Jesus and the fact that people would come to worship him as the Son of God. And myrrh, a perfume sometimes used to embalm dead bodies, represented the fact that Jesus would eventually suffer and die. Each gift represented a distinct part of the baby's destiny. 🕊️

## NOTEWORTHY DAYS

Noteworthy Days SPOTLIGHT is for HFTH !!!



**November 21—January 6—Hope for the Holidays Campaign** gives us an opportunity to share our good fortune with those experiencing challenges during this holiday season. Our donations will support these wonderful organizations provide much needed assistance to the individuals they strive to help throughout 2023.



**October 1—International Day of Older Persons—**This day highlights contributions made by older individuals to society. It also raises awareness of struggles that come with aging in modern society.



**October 4-5—Yom Kippur—**Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) is the last day to atone for our sins of the Ten Days of Repentance, which start on the New Year (Rosh Hashanah). Jews seek to 'purify their souls' on this day, by abstaining from common pleasures. It is a fast day from the eve until the next day nightfall (twenty-five hours). No food or drink is permissible. It is a day on which Jews 'afflict the soul', which includes wearing only non-leather shoes, not combing one's hair and no marital relations. For many Orthodox Jews, most of Yom Kippur is spent in prayer in the Synagogue.



**October 10—World Mental Health Day—**This day seeks to raise awareness about mental illness. This day aims to educate the population and mobilize efforts in support of mental health. Mental health includes a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It has become increasingly important in recent decades as an estimated 350 million people worldwide suffer from depression.



**November 16—International Day for Tolerance—**The International Day of Tolerance seeks to promote tolerance, respect, appreciation and cooperation amongst the world's different cultures. Tolerance refers to the recognition and acceptance of looks, opinions, beliefs and practices that differ from one's own. Tolerance is considered the backbone of human rights and fundamental freedoms as people are naturally different. Tolerance allows mixed communities to thrive and ensures that all humans are equally important.



**November 24—Thanksgiving Day**—Thanksgiving Day is a celebration of giving thanks for the harvest and blessings of the past year. It is a day of giving thanks and expressing our gratitude to friends and family members. Thanksgiving Day dates back to the Reformation Period and is accompanied by prayers, special ceremonies, and feasts. Thanksgiving is observed on the fourth Thursday in November each year.

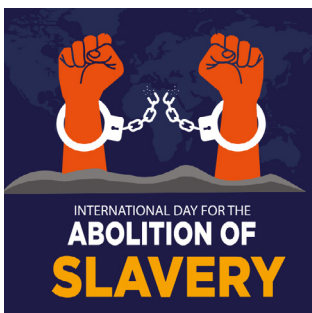


**November 25—International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**

This day seeks to raise awareness about violence against women. It aims to eliminate violence by removing stigma and encouraging women to speak out against abusers. This day defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm to women.... The goal of this day is to achieve equality, development, and peace. It aims toward the fulfillment of women and girls' human rights.



**December 1—World AIDS Day**—World AIDS Day serves to remember those who have died from AIDS and to bring about awareness of HIV/AIDS through education and publicly held events. World AIDS Day is also an opportunity for people to show their support for people living with HIV.



**December 2—International Day for the Abolishment of Slavery**—The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery aims to end slavery in the world. Contemporary forms of slavery include sexual exploitation, forced marriage, trafficking of persons and recruitment of children for armed conflict. The International Labor Organization estimates that there are 21 million people enslaved in the world, a business that generates around 150 billion US dollars in illegal profits every year.



**December 10—Human Rights Day**—Human Rights Day commemorates the day on which the United Nations issued the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. This document serves as an outline of the fundamental human rights that are to be universally protected. It was drafted by representatives from all regions of the world.



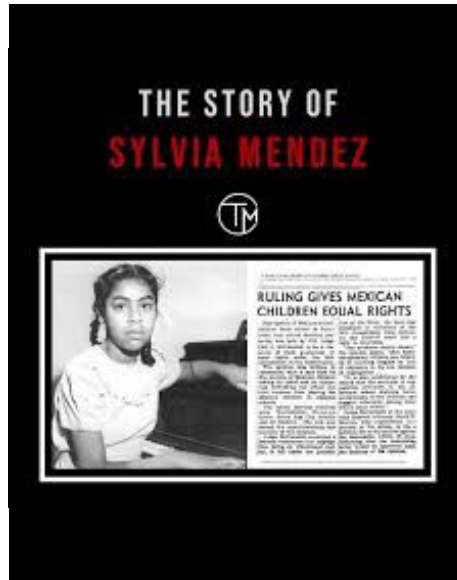
## Trailblazing Groundbreakers

Where Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Meet History



Ballotpedia

Kyra Harris Bolden, [first Black woman judge to serve on Michigan Supreme Court](#)



Wikipedia

Sylvia Mendez, [was 8 years old when her journey as a civil rights advocate began](#)



PBS

Constance Zappella, [became the first woman deputy chief in Jersey City](#)

**Never allow waiting to become a habit. Live your dreams and take risks. Life is happening now.** 🎯

## Lights, Cameras, Action!

Rolling out the red carpet for entertainment industry pioneers who broke barriers and established standards.



The Seattle Medium

Jonathan Batista, [has made history.](#)



JustWatch

Carol Burnett, [paved a path.](#)



Amazon.com

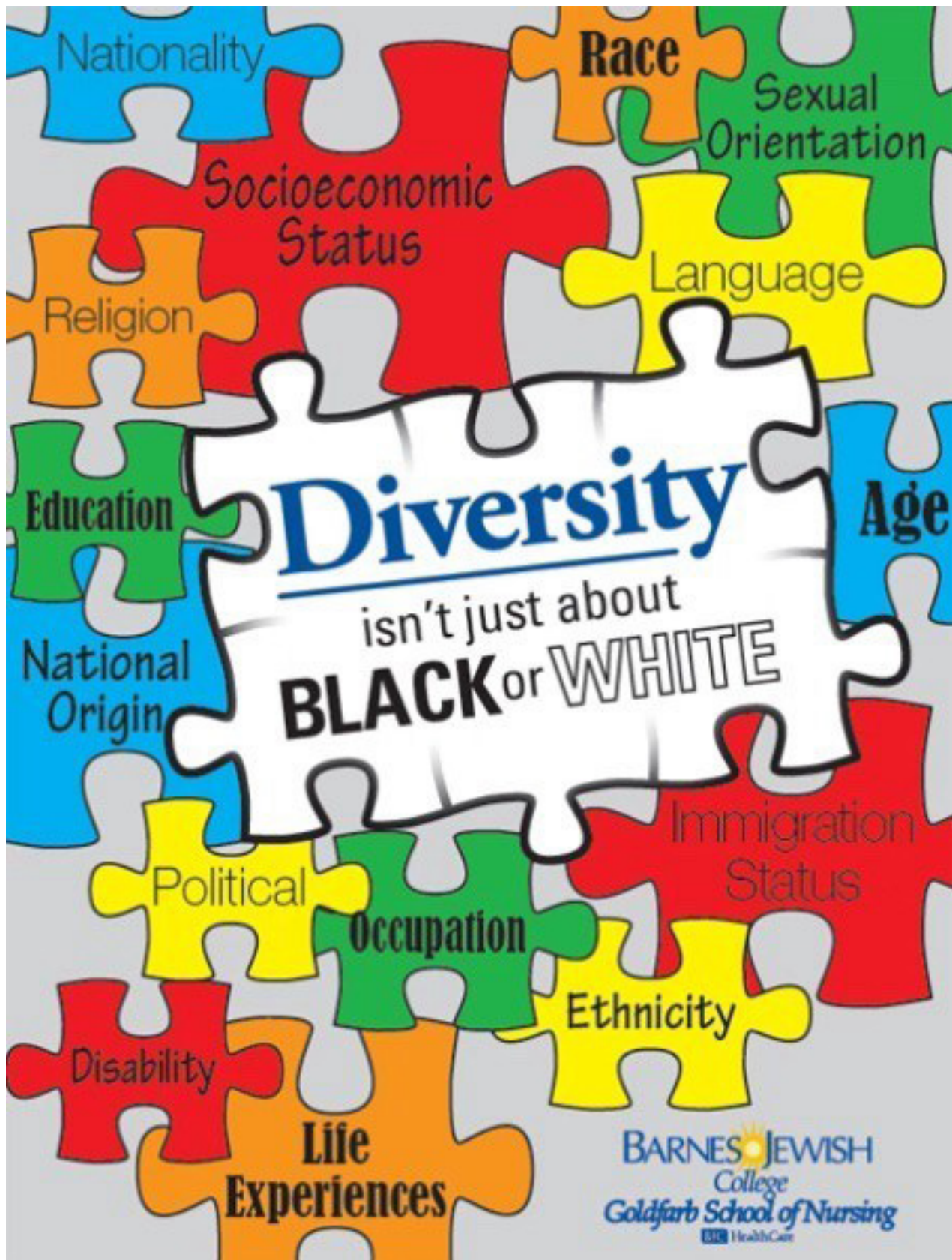
Lena Horne, [is a Broadway legend.](#)



WKBN.com

The Rockettes, [have taken steps towards DEI.](#)

## Diversity Poster





## Sports Corner

ESPN



Mary Joe Fernandez, [youngest player to win a match at the U.S. Open](#)

Facebook



Althea Gibson became the first person of color - female or male - to win at Wimbledon in 1957

Althea Gibson, [broke barriers](#)

MLB.com



Aaron Judge, [broke a 61 year-old record](#)

Black Enterprise



Earl Lloyd, [integrated the NBA](#)

Bleacher Report



Caroline O'Connor, [has been promoted](#)

USA Today



Landis Sims, [defies the odds](#)



## Carisk Café



Twas the day before Christmas, when all through Carisk  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung in the conference room with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;  
The patrons were nestled all snug in their chairs;  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in the air;  
When out on the parking lot there arose such a clatter,  
The patrons sprung to attention to see what was the matter.  
Away to their windows they flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters in a very quick dash.  
Through the lobby St. Nicholas came with a bound.  
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of diverse [recipes](#) he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, through the lobby he drove;  
He sprang on his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, as he flew out of sight--  
"Happy Christmas Carisk, and to all a good night!"

## Resources



### Full Reports & Related Materials for Caregivers in the U.S.

[Full Report Caregiving in the U.S. 2020](#) (PDF)

[Executive Summary](#) (PDF)

[Caregiving in the U.S. 2020 Age 18 to 49](#)

[Caregiving in the U.S. 2020 Age 50+](#)

[Appendix A: Full Questionnaire](#) (PDF)

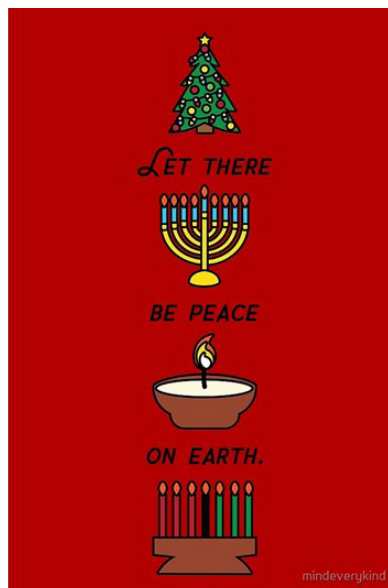
[Appendix B: Methodology](#) (PDF)

### Previous Report

[Caregiving in the U.S. 2015](#)

### Mental Health in the Workplace

[Surgeon General – Workplace Mental Health & Well Being](#)



©2022 Carisk Partners. Confidential.

This document and the information within are provided in confidence, and solely for the use of the recipient. It may not be reproduced, circulated, or disclosed to any third party, in whole or in part, without Carisk Partners' written consent.