

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Newsletter

May 2026 Edition

https://bnhra.org/Diversity_and_Inclusion



SUMMER OF EQUITY

We are almost through May here in WNY and dare I say it...summer is knocking on the door! I feel as though I can speak for all of WNY when I say that we are so beyond ready for the warmer temperatures and sunshine.

As summer arrives with longer days, brighter energy, and a fresh sense of connection, it also offers the perfect reminder that thriving workplaces grow when everyone is given the opportunity to succeed. Just like every plant needs different amounts of sunlight and care to flourish, employees need different forms of support to reach their full potential. That's where workplace equity comes in—creating an environment where people are given the resources, opportunities, and support they need to shine.

We hope you enjoy this kick off to summer edition, celebrating Equity In The Workplace!

EQUITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Equity in the workplace is about giving employees the specific support, resources, and opportunities they need to succeed. While equality means treating everyone the same, equity recognizes that every employee has different experiences, challenges, and needs. Creating an equitable workplace ensures that all individuals have a fair chance to grow, contribute, and thrive. Research continues to show that organizations with strong diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives often experience higher employee engagement, stronger innovation, and improved retention. Employees are more likely to feel motivated and connected when they believe their workplace is fair, supportive, and committed to removing barriers to success.

Workplace equity may include flexible work arrangements, accessible leadership opportunities, mentorship programs, fair compensation practices, or providing additional support where it is needed most. Equity is not about giving advantages—it is about creating fairness by recognizing that employees may require different paths to achieve the same opportunities.



**May 27 - Spring Networking at
Café Bewilderment**

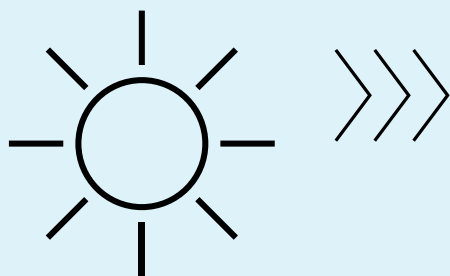
**SPECIAL EVENT!!!
7th Annual Women of Color
Summit**

**Kick Off Event: June 3-4, 2026
Virtual Summit: July 16 & 23,
2026**

Diversity is a fact.
Equity is a choice.
Inclusion is an
action. Belonging
is an outcome.

- Arthur Chan





SUMMER STATE OF MIND

Summer often brings a sense of renewal, energy, and connection. Teams gather for company events, flexible schedules become more common, and employees look for balance between work and personal life. It's also the perfect season for organizations to reflect on something that should remain a priority all year long: equality in the workplace.

Just as summer encourages growth and fresh beginnings, companies should use this season to evaluate how they support fairness across their organization. Are all employees given equal opportunities for advancement? Are diverse voices being heard during meetings and decision-making? Are workplace policies flexible and inclusive for everyone?

Summer also reminds us of the importance of connection. Team outings, wellness initiatives, and employee appreciation events can help strengthen workplace culture when everyone feels welcomed and included. Equality is not just about policies—it's about everyday actions that create a positive employee experience.

At the heart of every successful organization is a culture where people feel respected, empowered, and treated fairly. This summer, businesses have an opportunity to foster an environment where equality thrives and every employee can shine.

EVENT SPOTLIGHT – WOC SUMMIT

The seventh annual Women of Color Summit (WOC) & Ally Institute is regional two day in-person professional development conference. WOC summit will be held in Niagara Falls, NY, on June 3-4, 2026. Additionally, the series will continue with two virtual sessions on Thursday, July 16th and July 23rd. This year's theme: **B.R.I.D.G.E. – Connecting Voices, Cultivating Leaders, Advancing Equity.**



Equity In Action Awards!

It is with great excitement we announce the Equity In Action Leadership Forum and DEIA Awards!

Join us in celebrating the leaders in our community who truly embody and champion DEIA in their workplaces. Hear from our respected panelists what DEIA truly means, and forward our mission of creating meaningful pathways for all in WNY!

Voting is now open to nominate an individual you would like to recognize!

<https://lnkd.in/g8Gj79ap>



Special Feature - Andrea Griffa Harden, SPHR – Director of Talent & Culture, Buffalo AKG Art Museum



We are thrilled this month to feature Andrea Griffa Harden with the Buffalo AKG Art Museum! When asked how to do so, her answer was clear: *DEI absolutely cannot solely live in HR. It must be embraced by leadership, and all must be held accountable. Be prepared to hear the good, bad, and the ugly. When people let me know what isn't working or what is going against our IDEA stance, I take that as a privilege, as they are trusting me to share their concerns. It is an opportunity to seek to make those changes, rather than just having people unhappy behind the scenes. I also believe it is important to understand what needs to be changed to be different from who you are. And while we want to set goals, everything it takes to be a truly inclusive and equitable workplace is ongoing. There is always one more step to take!*