

A photograph of several hands of different skin tones reaching up and interlocking to form a circle, symbolizing unity and support.

UPDATE ON MARKHAM'S STRATEGY TO COMBAT ANTI-BLACK RACISM

Bulletin #2 - July 2021

Message From The Mayor:

Over the last couple of months, we have made significant progress on our strategy to combat anti-Black racism and I am happy to provide you with this update. Our eLearning module Let's Talk About Racism: An Introduction to Anti-Black Racism has been made available to the community and we have received many inquiries from organizations and cities across Canada about using our module for their employee education.

I am pleased to announce that the vacancy for the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist position has been filled. Joanne Kinya Baker will be joining the City of Markham in July. Joanne brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience having served in a similar role with a municipality in Alberta, as well as working at the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. As a member of the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, this role will have significant responsibility for, and impact on, our anti-Black racism initiatives.

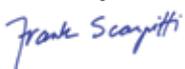
In March, we launched the recruitment for members of the Mayor's Black Youth Liaison Committee. Thank you to Sydney Baxter and Special Advisor Mary Anne Chambers for assisting in the interview process. The initial 9 members of the Mayor's Black Youth Liaison Committee have been appointed and the first meeting occurred in June.

In response to Request for Proposals to update the City's Diversity Action Plan we are pleased to announce that The Diversity Institute (Ryerson University) has been awarded the RFP and we look forward to launching the Diversity Action Plan Update this summer.

Every year, Markham's Race Relations Committee hosts the Many Faces of Markham student contest in support of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This contest showcases our community's diversity and promotes themes of inclusion, belonging and social cohesion. This year's theme was Working Together to Confront Anti-Black Racism and students from across Markham submitted an array of writing, artwork, videos and spoken word. I have included some of the impressive artwork and poetry from the winning submissions in this bulletin. Recently, CAYR Community Connections (one of the Aaniin Community Hub agencies) hosted virtual workshops on combatting anti-Black racism. I am grateful our community has joined the global movement to eradicate anti-Black racism so we can create a better and more inclusive society.

I would like to thank the Markham African Caribbean Canadian Association for once again organizing this year's Virtual Black History Month celebration in collaboration with the York Region Alliance of African Canadian Communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank Scarpitti".

Frank Scarpitti

Mayor

STRATEGY:

Update Diversity Action Plan – *Everyone Welcome* and that as one of the first steps, the City will begin the consultation process with members of the Black community

Markham Council and staff receive training on anti-Black racism

City of Markham to undertake an equity audit

Establish a Mayor's Anti-Black Racism Youth Liaison Committee

Appoint a Special Advisor to provide advice and guidance on measures to address anti-Black racism

Consult with Region of York, York Regional Police, School Boards and other area municipalities to identify opportunities to collaborate on initiatives to combat anti-Black racism and support diversity and inclusion

NEXT STEPS:

Development and introduction of unconscious bias training for City of Markham staff and Council

Call to action - In preparation for the City's Diversity Action Plan update, we are seeking information about community organizations and stakeholders that should be included in the community and stakeholder consultations. Contact information may be sent to Sandra Allen (Human Resources) at sallen@markham.ca

Launch of the Diversity Action Plan Update initiative – Initial preparation work will commence during the summer with comprehensive community and stakeholder consultations to be scheduled in the Fall

PROGRESS TO DATE:



Regular check-in's between Mayor, City Staff and City's Special Advisor, Mary Anne Chambers.



Monthly meetings between senior leadership at the City and the YRDSB to discuss opportunities for collaboration.



The establishment of the Mayor's Black Youth Liaison Committee and development of Terms of Reference with 9 inaugural youth members aged 15 to 19. This is an opportunity for our community's Black youth to provide perspectives about issues important to them as well as to have a voice in combatting anti-Black racism.



Posted the "Let's Talk about Racism: An Introduction to Anti-Black Racism" eLearning on www.markham.ca for public viewing and awareness raising. To date, more than 220 individuals have registered to take the eLearning, and of these, more than half identify as being associated with a community or not-for-profit organization.



Hired Joanne Kinya Baker as our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist. Joanne will be starting on July 8th and most recently joins us from the City of Chestermere, Alberta where she held the role of Diversity and Inclusion Specialist, establishing the City's first Diversity Strategy and implementing diversity initiatives for staff, Council and the community. This position will report directly to the Chief Administrative Officer and will play an important role in the City's ongoing diversity, equity, anti-racism and inclusion efforts.



Issued a Request for Proposals for Consulting Services for the Diversity Action Plan Update, reviewed many submissions, and awarded a contract to The Diversity Institute. The Diversity Action Plan will involve consultations with the community and stakeholders as input to creating the future framework of prioritized actions to foster a socially cohesive and equitable society where everyone, and all communities, in Markham, feel welcome, a sense of belonging and that they can live free from discrimination, all forms of racism, stereotypes and other barriers. The updated Diversity Action Plan will also include an action plan to address anti-Black racism, also based on community consultations expected to occur in the Fall.



The Markham Race Relations Committee launched its annual Many Faces of Markham contest for Markham children and youth in support of the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This year's theme is "Working Together to Confront Anti-Black Racism". More than 263 submissions of writing, art, spoken word and video were received and reviewed by the Race Relations Committee. Winners are currently being announced.



Facilitating internal small group staff discussions about anti-Black racism to reinforce learnings from the "Let's Talk about Racism: An Introduction to Anti-Black Racism" e-Learning that was rolled out in the winter.



Amplification of Markham African Caribbean Canadian Association initiatives through social media channels.

Mayor's Black Youth Liaison Committee

Sydney Baxter

Hanifah Johnson

Alexis Agyei-Gyamera

Maxine Ehiogu

Phinees Crepin-Nkaba

Rafeeda Rania

Cameron David

Daniel Esson

Addisa O'Brien-Thompson

MANY FACES OF MARKHAM 2021

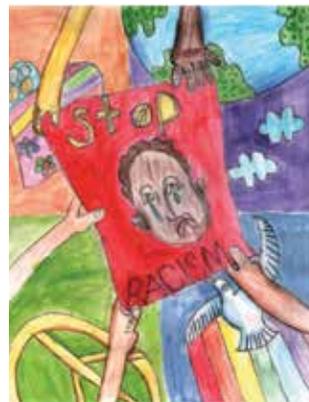
Theme: Working Together to Confront Anti-Black Racism - Artwork



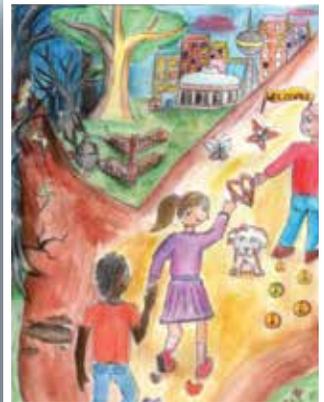
1st Place - Kindergarten
A - K-18
Emma Zheng
Markham's Faces



1st Place - Grade 1
A - 1-10
Derek Sun
Beware of Wet Paint Art School
Love Fountain



1st Place - Grade 2
A - 2-7
Marcus Huang
Beware of Wet Paint Art School
Racism, you are out with red card!



1st Place - Grade 3
A - 3-15
Maggie Wu
Beware of Wet Paint Art School
A dead end or a bright future of mankind?



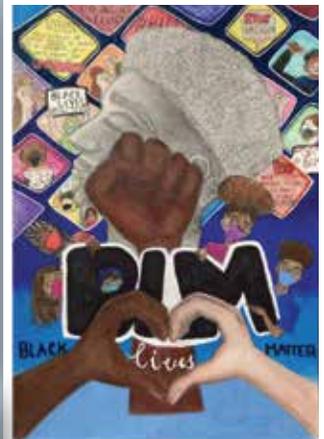
1st Place - Grade 4
A - 4-12
Bernice Lo
Beware of Wet Paint Art School
Scissors to cute! Rock to stop!
Paper to embrace!



1st Place - Grade 5
A - 5-15
Eunice Sun
Beware of Wet Paint Art School
Walking to a new world



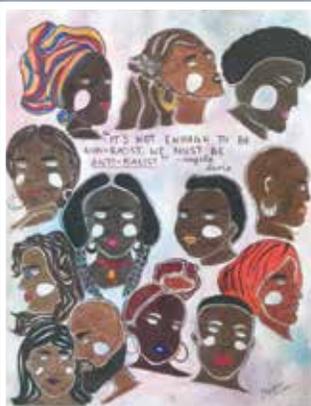
1st Place - Grade 6
A - 5-15
Eunice Sun
Beware of Wet Paint Art School
Walking to a new world



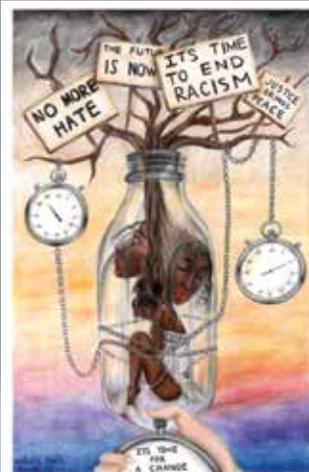
1st Place - Grade 7
A - 7-1
Carmel Joy
Acuzar Blessed Scalabrini
Catholic School
United Together Confronting
Anti-Black Racism



1st Place - Grade 8
A - 8-5
Athena Wong
Beware of Wet Paint Art School
Healing the wounds of racism



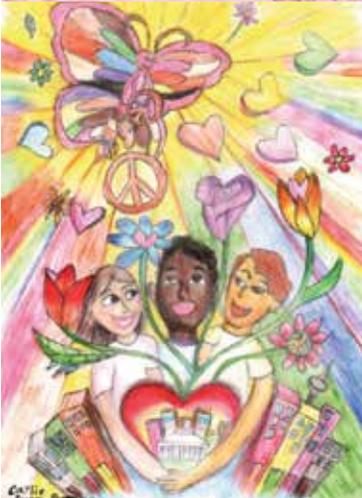
1st Place (tie) - Grade 9 to 12
A - 10-1
Shivani Dave
Bur Oak Secondary School
It Isn't Enough to be Non-Racist



1st Place (tie) - Grade 9 to 12
A - 11-1
Natalie Trach
Beware of Wet Paint Art School
It's time for a change

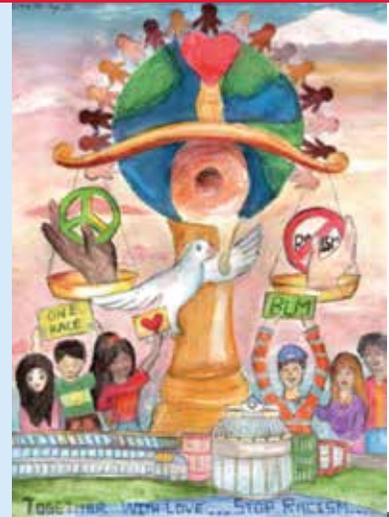
MANY FACES OF MARKHAM 2021

Theme: Working Together to Confront Anti-Black Racism - Writing



A Canadian citizen, yes I am
A proud, young, black youth.
I am human, just like all of you.
When I stand up for myself, I am known as ghetto.
When I speak the truth, my voice is shut down immediately
Like a lion without its roar.
A butterfly without its wings.
They perceive my achievements as a coincidence
Everyone looks at my success and talent as unforeseen
I am looked down on due to my race
People see me as a born mistake and say the (n) word to my face.
I feel unborn, unimportant and invisible
A bird that sings no song.
I wish everyone would just get along
People saying good morning and shaking hands
Discrimination, segregation and racism will be no longer.
Everyone with smiles on their faces and the relationships between
people become stronger!
I want to see a world where a black girl like me can feel appreciated.
Acceptance and celebration of all diversity and races
A world of wonders and peace.
A place where people of colour are known for excellence.
What a wonderful world it would be!
A society where the black community will finally feel acceptance
A world where the (n) word is forbidden and not in our vocabulary
A world where black history is acknowledged all year round
A world where Caribbean culture is appreciated and celebrated
A world where a black girl like me can feel proud and welcomed
A world where there is joy and laughter
A world where there is always a happily ever after
Giver that, Black is Beauty!

1st Place
W - 8-2
Janae Layne
Randall Public School
Black is Beauty



Leadership Team
Frank Scarpitti, Mayor
Claudia Storto, City Solicitor and HR Director
Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer
Mary Anne Chambers, Special Advisor