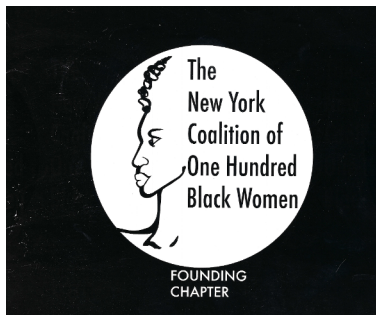


The Beacon

A Newsletter of the New York Coalition of One Hundred Black Women, Inc.

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Shine a Light On

**Edna Beach, Founder
Coalition of 100 Black Women**



A recently viewed recorded interview with Coalition Founder Edna Beach included Ms. Beach recalling that "in 1970, twenty-four Black women began meeting in their homes to assess the problems and opportunities left behind in the wake of the turbulent 1960's. As a result of their meetings, they formed the Coalition of 100 Black Women. For the rest of the 1970s, they slowly but persistently worked to master root causes of issues that affected their families, their communities and themselves. They boldly began to reach out to other Black women in common cause and eventually mobilized their emerging stature as a visible force of influence promoting gender and racial equity."

During the interview Ms. Beach shared her vision that the Coalition would become a political force and would use its strength to place Black women's needs and demands on various legislative agendas and that The Coalition would produce our own candidates for elected offices.

The coming year will test our commitment to realizing the vision of our Founders. In 2021, we will have the opportunity to make our voices heard as New York City prepares to elect a new Mayor, a new City Council, a new Comptroller, a Public Advocate, and 5 Borough Presidents all while adjusting to the recently approved system of Ranked-Choice Voting.

There is much work for us to do but no better time than now to remember and act upon the goals of Edna Beach who believed that politics is a vital force that impacts every aspect of our lives.

**Website of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, www.ncbw.org*

THE OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS OF THE NEW YORK COALITION OF ONE HUNDRED BLACK WOMEN, INC. WISH YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES PEACE, JOY, AND HAPPINESS DURING THIS

From the President...

Well, we have made it to the end of 2020 and what a year this has been. We couldn't have imagined that our February meeting would be the last time we would meet face-to-face this year, but that turned out to be true. We had to adjust to being "socially distant" and the word quarantine although scary would become familiar.

However, as we approach a different but no less holy holiday season, we have come to realize that the most precious gifts we can receive are the gifts of health, friendship and love for one another. Just think of the stories we will be able to pass on to our grandchildren about "The Pandemic of 2020" and how we got through it. Unfortunately, there are many of our family, friends, co-workers and neighbors who were not fortunate enough to live through the year and we will continue to remember them fondly and keep them in our hearts.

Now as we look forward to the year 2021, I would be remiss if I did not thank you for your support during this year. We have had to work together in new ways and we have learned new things (Zoom) but we are the better for it. Despite all of the obstacles we have faced, we have grown in ways we could never have anticipated. I thank you and ... "I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

**Barbara Kairson
President**

A Role Model Post Script

Allison J. Cooke

For more than 40 years our Signature Role Model program has helped to prepare young women for entry into various career fields by connecting them with Mentors and by providing a glimpse into actual workplace settings. The information obtained during the week-long experience, presented in partnership with our corporate sponsor L'Oreal USA, impacts the lives of the participants in ways we can only imagine.

Unfortunately, we often lose contact with the students following their graduation from college but recently one of the former participants, Allison J. Cooke, contacted The Coalition to tell us about what she has been doing since completing the Role Model program. Following are excerpts from an email that she forwarded:

"First and foremost, I want to acknowledge that the Role Model experience impacted me tremendously during my undergraduate career. The time spent in this program, shaped my perspective and influenced me to always seek a mentor and be a mentor to the youth of my community.

Since graduating CCNY in 2017, I have done many things. In 2017 I was hired as a Beacon Community Center Director, working with 1350 participants and their families in the Morrisanna section of the Bronx. Being a member of the Bronx community, I was impacted tremendously by the young people and their families. I was challenged beyond my understanding and found it extremely difficult to serve my community managing the disparities my community faced. This led me to my masters degree program in Youth Studies. This year, I received my MA from CUNY SPS.

At the moment, I am a Policy and Program Analyst, for the Public Space Unit, working in the Transportation Planning and Management division within the NYC DOT. I started working in this position as of January 2019. There I assist in the management of Public Spaces and during COVID, rolled out the Open Street, Open Street: Restaurants, Open Street: Plazas, Open Streets: Play, and Emergency Bike parking initiatives. My goal in this position is to change the way planning of public space is executed and I am spearheading an initiative for

community.

Some other work I have done this year, worth highlighting, would be my research work. In the beginning of 2020, I had done research with NYC DOHMH, CUNY Public Science Project, and Bronx Food Markets, on building micro food hubs in the Bronx, which was a life time achievement, since the information uncovered assisted many families during the initial impact of COVID. In 2019, I collaborated with NYC HPD, NYC Bronx City Planning, NYC DOHMH, and CUNY Public Science Project on Violence, on Food and Housing around Southern Blvd, within Community Boards 2 and 3.

All in all, I have been creating a path for myself, building a network, and giving my time to the community. As a member of the Alumni community, for CUNY SPS, I am mentoring masters degree students that are interested in government. Which is truly rewarding.

Lastly, I was recently hired as the Diversity Specialist for the Department of Transportation. I am expecting to start that position in January. There, I will lead the Employee Resource Groups and build out inclusive, equitable, and diverse strategies impacting all 5,000 plus employees working at NYCDOT.

I am still at the beginning of my career, with the shift in leadership at NYCDOT, I am sure I will be in the right place at the right time, creating opportunities for folks that look like me, to enter the transportation industry."

In the coming months The Coalition will share more information about our Role Model program alumnae. In the meantime, you may read more about Allison's accomplishments in the online publication, *The Gothamist*. by clicking on the following link:

<https://gothamist.com/arts-entertainment/creating-space-youth-meet-cuny-sps-student-allisoncooke>



Don't Miss Out

If you haven't done so already, or even if you have, there is still time to purchase a 50th Anniversary commemorative t-shirt. The shirts sell for \$30.00 (which includes postage and handling) and the proceeds from the sales will go toward supporting Coalition programs and scholarships.

You can show pride in our organization by contacting 1st Vice President Dorothea Thompson-Manning at: nycobw.vpplanning17@gmail.com for information on how you can purchase a beautiful commemorative t-shirt. Don't get left out!

A Friendly Reminder...

Please remember that you may now submit your 2021 dues by personal check, Zelle, or PayPal. You can mail your check payable to New York Coalition of One Hundred Black Women to: NYCOBW, P.O. Box 2555, Grand Central Station, New York, NY, 10163 or you may use Zelle or PayPal. Please contact Danielle Doucette, Financial Secretary, at: nycobw.financialsecretary20@gmail.com should you have questions about any of these payment methods.

RANKED-CHOICE VOTING IS ON THE WAY

New York City voted on Tuesday (November 5, 2019) to change the way it determines election winners. With approval from more than 73% of voters, the Big Apple joins Maine and countries including Australia and New Zealand in adopting what's known as ranked-choice voting.

This popular electoral system allows voters to rank candidates by preference, meaning they can submit ballots that list not only their first-choice candidate for a position, but also their second, third and so on.

Ranked-choice voting advocates, including Democratic presidential candidate Andrew Yang, who has championed it as a key policy initiative, say it could help prevent evermore polarized election campaigns, increase the number of women and minority candidates running for office, and reduce negative campaigning. Critics say that the new system could make elections much more complicated for voters and be abused by parties trying to game the system.*

In the coming weeks, the Coalition will share more information about this new voting system. that will soon be implemented Stay tuned.



*BY **ANNA PURNA KAMBHAMPATY**

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