



www.duboisfreedomcenter.org  
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## 2024 Programming Season

The Board of The W. E. B. Du Bois Center for Freedom and Democracy has selected the theme of “**Reflections on Democracy**” for its 2024 season.

### Act

We invite you to read and reflect on the following passage from Dr. Du Bois:

“...I dream of a world of infinitive and valuable variety; not in the laws of gravity or atomic weights, but in human variety in height and weight, color and skin, hair and nose and lip. But more especially and far above and beyond this, is a realm of true freedom: in thought and dream, fantasy and imagination; in gift, aptitude, and genius – all possible manner of difference, topped with freedom of soul to do and be, and freedom of thought to give to a world and build into it, all wealth of inborn individuality. Each effort to stop this freedom of being is a blow at democracy—that real democracy which is reservoir and opportunity . . . There can be no perfect democracy curtailed by color, race, or poverty. But with all we accomplish all, even Peace.”

~ Excerpt from *The World and Africa: An Inquiry into the Part Which Africa Has Played in World History*, 1947.

We encourage you to share your reflections on this passage and hopes for our Democracy by clicking [here](#).

### Learn

The Du Bois Freedom Center proudly presents a **Scholars Salon Series** moderated by our Executive Director Ny Whitaker, and our inaugural Visiting Scholar on Democracy Michael Blake, which will be held at various partner sites across The Berkshires.

The series will include four moderated conversations focused on:

- Democracy + Leadership (Spring)
- Democracy + Faith (Summer)
- Democracy + Education (Fall)
- Democracy + Philanthropy (Fall)

All programs in this series are free and open to the public. A curriculum guide, reading list, and videos will be made available via [The Center's website](#) for families and schools to participate both in person and virtually.

### Engage

The Center will also host a series of private **Du Bois Democracy Dinners** which will provide donors with an intimate opportunity to engage with Du Bois Scholars and prominent guest speakers to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of our native son – both locally and globally.

For more information or to reserve your ticket for an upcoming event, please email: [office@duboisfreedomcenter.org](mailto:office@duboisfreedomcenter.org)





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## Enjoy

The Reflections on Democracy 2024 season was unveiled at a birthday celebration in honor of Dr. Du Bois in February at Saint James Place. The season includes additional collaborations with the following organizations:

- Dewey Hall
- The Mahaiwe Theater
- The Clark Art Institute
- The Forum (Summer)

## Support

The W. E. B. Du Bois Center for Freedom and Democracy (dba, the Du Bois Freedom Center) is dedicated to educating the public about the life and legacy of civil rights pioneer and NAACP co-founder, W. E. B. Du Bois. Our 501(c)(3) organization is restoring the historic Clinton A. M. E. Zion Church in downtown Great Barrington for adaptive reuse as an African American heritage site and cultural center with museum-quality exhibits and contemporary programming. Built in 1887 by the A. M. E. Zion Society, the church was a formative influence in the life of W. E. B. Du Bois, who was born and raised in this rural New England town. The extant church, located at 9 Elm Court, served as the spiritual, cultural, and political hub of African American life in this southern Berkshire community until its closing in 2014.

To support the Center's on-going work in celebration of the rich African American history of the Berkshires, please visit: [www.duboisfreedomcenter.org](http://www.duboisfreedomcenter.org)

To make a donation today, please click [here](#) or scan the QR Code below:





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## About Ny Whitaker, Executive Director

A former White House senior advisor and New York University professor with more than 20 years of corporate, nonprofit, and public sector leadership experience, Whitaker will lead the transformation of the historic Clinton A. M. E. Zion Church into an African American cultural and heritage center dedicated to celebrating Du Bois in his birthplace.

As a nonprofit executive and strategic consultant, Whitaker has successfully implemented multi-million dollar fundraising and awareness campaigns for NYC Health & Hospitals Corporation, Ogilvy, and the Magic Johnson Foundation, and produced events for the United Nations and the Altman Foundation. Whitaker served as vice president of Programs & Sponsorship on the board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals – NY Metro Chapter, and has extensive experience in development, marketing, the creation of strategic partnerships, and building coalitions with elected officials and community organizations.

Whitaker will oversee operations, fundraising, and programming while reporting to the Center's board. She will work with project manager Eugenie Sills, who served as interim executive director until last spring, as well as Du Bois Forum director Kendra Field, and the organization's stakeholders.

To learn more about Ny, please visit our [website](#).

## About Michael Blake, Visiting Scholar on Democracy

Michael's vision is simple: Bringing Equity and Justice to Scale. Blake has a record of delivering results including but not limited to being elected Vice-Chair of the Democratic National Committee, his three terms as a New York State Assembly Member, both Presidential campaigns for President Obama including serving as the Iowa Constituency Outreach Director and three Michigan victories.

Michael has a long history of progressive activism, both as an aide to President Barack Obama and as a New York State Assembly Member. In the Obama White House, Michael was part of the team that passed the Affordable Care Act, an economic stimulus package that ended the Great Recession, and a student loan bill that lowered the cost of attending college. Michael also created the White House Urban Entrepreneurship series to create job opportunities in cities across the country.

A proud graduate of Northwestern University, The Bronx native is of Jamaican descent and is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha, Fraternity, Inc., 100 Black Men, five year term member of Council of Foreign Relations and former NYU and Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics Fellow.

To learn more about Michael, please visit our [website](#).

