



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Centering Racial Equity for a Stronger Regional Economy
ANCA announces topics, presenters for virtual Annual Meeting

SARANAC LAKE, N.Y. — On its surface, racial equity implies the fair treatment of all people, regardless of race. However, America’s fraught history of race exposes how Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) have been disproportionately denied access to systems, structures and pathways that result in fair opportunities and outcomes for all. By centering racial equity in our communities, we can [increase the collective economic and social success](#) for all who live and work in the North Country region.

These values are at the heart of the Adirondack North Country Association’s 2020 annual meeting, which will take place via Zoom on Friday, September 18 from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. The virtual event will focus on how racial equity is essential for a stronger, more resilient North Country region, as businesses and communities rebuild from the COVID-19 pandemic.

ANCA is home to the Adirondack Diversity Initiative’s inaugural director, Nicole Hylton-Patterson, who was hired in December 2019 — three months before COVID-19 closed down New York State economies and five months before the killing of George Floyd and subsequent worldwide racial justice protests. Hylton-Patterson has been instrumental in the design and execution of ANCA’s annual meeting, which centers racial equity in economic development in the North Country.

ANCA Executive Director Kate Fish said these recent crises provide a unique opportunity to create regional economic systems that are more equitable, particularly for people of color.

“With all we’ve learned this year, we recognize that racial equity must be a key part of rebuilding our regional economy,” Fish said. “We are so grateful to have Nicky on our team, as she continually challenges us to integrate justice and inclusion in our work. With our annual meeting, we want to extend this challenge to our friends, neighbors and partners, with a shared goal of advancing racial equity in the North Country.”

The virtual meeting will feature presentations about how racial equity relates to three economic sectors: local food systems, the entrepreneurial economy and the clean energy sector:

- Structural racism in the U.S. food system, presented by Adam Dewbury, PhD, local food system coordinator at ANCA
- Racial equity in developing and maintaining “solopreneurships,” presented by Valerie D. White, executive director at Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) NYC
- Addressing racial equity in workforce development within the clean energy sector, presented by Bryana DiFonzo, director of new economy at PUSH Buffalo

“This meeting provides an opportunity to listen, learn and lean into the difficult work of making the North Country more racially equitable for all New Yorkers and visitors,” said Hylton-Patterson. “It is intended for long-time allies, emerging accomplices and beginners who are ready to challenge systems and practices that have discriminated against and disadvantaged BIPOC communities for generations.”

The meeting will take place via Zoom on September 18, 1:00-3:30 p.m. and includes opportunities for questions and answers via chat. ANCA invites community members, business owners, elected officials and nonprofit leadership throughout the North Country region to register for a fee of their choice, from \$10 to \$100, at www.adirondack.org/2020AnnualMeeting.

[ANCA](#) is an independent, nonprofit corporation with a transformational approach to building prosperity across northern New York. ANCA’s community-informed, results-driven strategies for local food producers, small business owners, would-be entrepreneurs and municipal innovators offer targeted interventions that are designed to keep wealth and value in local communities.

Attached: one (1) PDF document

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