



**NAACP**  
*Manchester Branch*

## **Freedom Fund Dinner 2023**

**Saturday November 4th, 6pm to 9pm**  
**Doors Open at 6pm. Virtual Event starts at 7pm.**

**Location: Hybrid at St. Anselm's Institute of Politics**

**Theme: Thriving Together**

**Keynote Speaker: Bishop Vashti McKenzie, President/General Secretary of the National Council of Churches**

**The Freedom Fund Dinner is our way of lifting up those who exemplify the values and philosophy of the NAACP. It is a time to come together and celebrate each other and recognize heroes for social justice.**



[naacpmanchesternh.com](http://naacpmanchesternh.com)



# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

***Master of Ceremonies: Dr. Tracy Strombom***

***Welcome Message: Dr. Tracy Strombom***

***Invocation: Minister Ray Ealy***

***Performance: Lift Every Voice and Sing***

***President's Remarks:***

**Mr. James T. McKim Jr.**

***Spoken Word Performance:***

**Mr. Michael Rodriguez & Mr. Jose Bermudez**

***New England Area Conference***

***President Remarks: Mr. Michael Curry***

**-- BREAK --**

***Keynote Speaker: Bishop Vashti McKenzie***

***Award Presentations: Mr. James T. McKim Jr.***

***Closing Remarks: Mr. Arnold Mikolo***

**-- We Shall Overcome --**

***Benediction: Minister Ray Ealy***

# WELCOME TO THE 2023.

# FREEDOM FUND EVENT



As you may know, the Freedom Fund Event is our largest fundraising effort of the year. It fuels our activities for the entire year.

This year's event comes during a time when we are coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic and things seem to be getting back to normal from the perspective of being able to interact with each other without fear of illness or death.

**But is normal what we really need?**

The divisiveness we have seen in our society has been felt in all walks of life from healthcare to economic opportunity to criminal justice. It has created a hunger for a time when we all get along. And, thus, with our newfound freedom to interact and the sense of dread in interacting, we have the opportunity to heal the divisions so we can all live happy fulfilling lives.

To take advantage of this opportunity, this year's event topic is **Thriving Together**. It is a continuation of the theme of this July's NAACP Annual Convention. And to help us understand why this moment is right to thrive together, even here in New Hampshire, we are pleased to have Bishop Vashti Murphy-McKenzie, President/General Secretary of the National Council of Churches of Christ, as our keynote speaker and special guest. She will lay the foundation for the work the Branch will do over the next year to help people of color thrive in the Greater Manchester Area. I hope you will hear his message and work with us to live into it.

The purpose of his event is, also, to lift up those who have been exemplary in their actions to fulfill the NAACP mission to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons. I offer my congratulations to all our award winners.

This year's event is hybrid. It is no small feat to put on. I am so very proud of the way the Freedom Fund Committee has worked to make this event happen. My thanks to them, to our sponsors, and to you for your attendance in what I know will be a great event we will be talking about for years to come!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James T. McGinnis". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Manchester NAACP President**

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

## **BISHOP VASHTI MURPHY MCKENZIE**



**Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie is the new President/General Secretary of the National Council of Churches (NCC). She provides executive leadership to 37 communions (denominations) representing 100,000 churches and 30 million people. She is the first African American woman to hold both positions.**

**Bishop McKenzie is also the 117th elected and consecrated bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the first female elected to episcopal office in the more than the two-century-old AME Church. She is the first female to serve as President of the Council of Bishops and President of the General Board.**

**Bishop McKenzie has served as a Presiding Prelate in the 18th Episcopal District, in Southern Africa, the 13th Episcopal District which includes Kentucky and Tennessee and the 10th Episcopal District, the state of Texas. While serving in Texas, she also served as Chair of the Board of Trustees at Paul Quinn College, Dallas, Texas which experienced exponential growth including the renovation of the Richard Allen Chapel and the new Trammell Crow Life, Living and Learning dormitory complex that includes a new-state-of-the-art gymnasium. She also established two non-profits which raised funds outside of tithes and offerings for church and community projects in two of her districts.**

**Bishop McKenzie serves the National Council of Churches after recently retiring from active service in the AME Church at the 51st Quadrennial session of the General Conference in 2021. She is also serving at Payne Theological Seminary, Wilberforce, Ohio, working on documentaries. She has been the visionary behind five documentaries, four of them in The Anvil series, of the Council of Bishops serving as producer, executive producer, and senior editor. The newest documentary, AME Next, was released in early 2022.**

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# KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Bishop McKenzie has been active in social justice issues for more than three decades. She was appointed in 2009 by President Barack Obama to be on the inaugural White House Commission of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnership. This group worked on behalf of Americans committed to improving their communities, no matter their religious or political beliefs. She was named by Huffington Post in 2014 as one of the 50 Most Powerful Women Religious Leaders in the World.**

**Bishop McKenzie is the author of six books including Not Without a Struggle and Journey to the Well. Her newest book is The Big Deal of Taking Small Steps to Move Closer to God. The book shows how to develop a stronger relationship with God with a more effective Christian lifestyle by taking small steps that lead to big changes.**

**Bishop McKenzie is a graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park, Howard University, School of Religion and has an earned doctorate from United Theological Seminary.**

**She is the widow of former NBA player, Dr. Stan McKenzie, the mother of three adult children and “Nina” to three grandchildren.**

# A W A R D S

## **Congratulations to all our recipients!**



### **Social Justice Champion - Aloyo Lidia Yen**



**Lidia Yen wears many hats. From community organizing to supporting small business owners, she is a dedicated and multi-talented individual who continually strives to make a positive impact in her community and the lives of those she serves.**

**Lidia holds a degree in business management with a healthcare focus and is currently enrolled in a Master's in Accounting program, showcasing her commitment to financial expertise. She has a track record of leadership, having led 'Change for Concord' for two years with a strong focus on achieving equity in public education.**

**Her passion for helping Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in her community is unwavering. Lidia served as one of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation's Community Listeners, researching the barriers to resources in New Hampshire, and was a member of the disability advisory board for Planned Parenthood. Lidia is currently a member of the American Friends Service Support Committee. She advocates for people's needs and connects them to vital resources, making a tangible difference in their lives.**

**Apart from her community involvement, Lidia currently serves as a Program Coordinator at the SNHU Center for New Americans, where she dedicates her time to assisting immigrant children in an after-school program and their families who visit.**

**Looking ahead, Lidia's aspirations include completing her Accounting degree and focusing on her own business endeavors, all while maintaining her active engagement in the community. In her free time, she enjoys playing tennis during the summer and takes pride in being a business owner.**

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# A W A R D S

## Criminal Justice Champion - Ronelle Tshiela



Ronelle Tshiela is Cofounder of Black Lives Matter New Hampshire. In 2020, she was appointed by Governor Sununu to serve on the NH Commission on Law Enforcement Accountability, Community, and Transparency. Last year, she was named to NH Business Review's biennial list of the state's most influential business leaders.

Ronelle is passionate about maternal health, and is a board member of the Reproductive Freedom Fund of New Hampshire.

She is currently in her last year at UNH School of Law, where she serves as President of the Women's Law Student Association. She hopes to focus her career on Civil Rights and social justice.

## Excellence In Journalism - Mark Hayward



Mark Hayward has worked as a reporter for the New Hampshire Union Leader from 1997 until his retirement this July. From 2012 until July, he started writing the weekly column *City Matters*, which focused on the personalities, issues, potential and problems associated with the state's largest city. His writing as a columnist and a news reporter has won several first place awards from press associations in New Hampshire and New England.

Mark graduated from The Ohio State University in 1983. Before landing in Manchester, Mark wrote for newspapers in Keene; Lewiston, Maine; and the Piedmont area of North Carolina. He now writes part time for several publications in the region and coordinates mobilization and outreach activities for the New Hampshire NewsGuild.

During his career, Mark abided by the notion of a journalist, coined in 1902 by humorist Finley Peter Dunne, who said that a newspaper's job is to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."

# HISTORY OF THE NAACP

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**The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded in 1909 by a multiracial group activist and interested citizens.**

**The principal objective of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of minority group citizens of the United States. The NAACP is committed to non-violence and relies upon the press, the petition, the ballot, and the courts, even in the face of overt and violent racial hostility.**

**Manchester, New Hampshire Branch #2069 was established in 1964 by a group of Black and white citizens who believed in the democratic process to ensure equal opportunity for all. The organization was founded at a time in the history of New Hampshire when the minority population was very small. Residents of African descent were subjected to the typical social practices current at that time. As the nascent Civil Rights movement was emerging in the South, the New Hampshire Union Leader became a vocal opponent; however, the Manchester NAACP founders believed that the principles of freedom and democracy were not limited by race, creed or color. They came together to form a chapter of the NAACP, the premier civil rights organization of the day, as a beacon of support for brotherhood and civil rights.**

**In its 55-year history, the leadership and membership of the organization has been a testament to the diversity of Manchester, New Hampshire. Branch activities have included housing and employment discrimination programs, college preparation workshops and support for the passage of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. state holiday.**

**Individuals of every age, race, religion and creed have been members of the Manchester Branch. Despite the challenges faced by members, Branch #2069 has been chartered for 55 years continuously. We continue to carry on the tradition of the largest and oldest, the best and boldest civil rights organization in America.**

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# HISTORY OF THE NAACP

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## **Mission:**

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination.

## **Vision Statement:**

The vision of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is to ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race.

## **Objectives:**

The following statement of objectives is found on the first page of the NAACP Constitution-the principal objectives of the Association shall be:

- To ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all citizens
- To achieve equality of rights and eliminate race prejudice among the citizens of the United States
- To remove all barriers of racial discrimination through democratic processes
- To seek enactment and enforcement of federal, state, and local laws securing civil rights
- To inform the public of the adverse effect of racial discrimination and to seek its elimination
- To educate persons as to their constitutional rights and to take all lawful action to secure the exercise thereof and to take any other lawful action in furtherance of these objectives, consistent with the NAACP's Articles of Incorporation and this Constitution.

# MANCHESTER NAACP

## BRANCH OFFICERS

### **President**

**Mr. James T. McKim**

### **Vice Presidents**

**Mr. Arnold Mikolo**

**Dr. Tracy Strombom**

### **Treasurer**

**Pastor Carola**

**Beasley-Topliffe**

### **Secretary**

**Mr. Curtis Smith**

### **Assistant Secretary**

**Ms. Cindy Encarnacion**

### **Executive Committee**

**Ms. Donna Brown, Esq, Legal Redress Committee Chair**

**Mr. Chris Kelly, Environmental & Climate Justice Committee Chair**

**Dr. Tracy Strombom, Health Committee Chair**

**Mr. Colin Rugg, Economic Justice Committee Chair**

**Mr. Woullard Lett, Education Committee Chair**

**Ms. Shaunte Whitted, Freedom Fund Committee Chair**

**Ms. Jacqueline Davis, At-Large Member**

**Ms. Claudette Williams, At-Large Member**

**Ms. Ms. Shalimar Encarnacion, At-Large Member**

### **2023 Freedom Fund Planning Committee**

**Ms. Shaunte Whitted**

**Mr. James McKim**

**Pastor Carola Beasley-Topliffey**

# LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING LYRICS

Lift every voice and sing,  
Till earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the list'ning skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died; Yet with a  
steady beat,  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of  
the slaughtered, Out from the gloomypast,  
Til now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way; Thou who has  
by Thy might  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met  
Thee, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget  
Thee; Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand, True to our God,  
True to our native land.

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# LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING LYRICS



**Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" or "The Harp", a sculpture created by Harlem Renaissance artist Augusta Savage for the World's Fair, depicted on the cover of the April 1939 issue of the NAACP's The Crisis magazine.**

**Often referred to as 'The Black National Anthem," Lift Every Voice and Sing was a hymn written as a poem by NAACP leader James Weldon Johnson in 1900.**

**At the turn of the 20th century, Johnson's lyrics eloquently captured the solemn yet hopeful appeal for the liberty of Black Americans. Set against the religious invocation of God and the promise of freedom, the song was later adopted by NAACP and prominently used as a rallying cry during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.**

# BECOME A MEMBER



## **Manchester NAACP Monthly Meetings**

**Our membership meets every fourth Thursday of each month to discuss important issues that are affecting our community. Our Committees meet monthly to plan ways to address these issues in the sectors of education, health, economy, environment, and criminal justice.**

**Visit: [naacpmanchesternh.com/ become-a-member](http://naacpmanchesternh.com/become-a-member) or scan the QR Code below**



# NAACP

*Manchester Branch*

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation  
is proud to support the  
**Manchester Branch of the NAACP**  
and its work to ensure the political,  
educational, social, and economic equality of  
all citizens in the Greater Manchester area.

Thank you for your leadership and service  
in making New Hampshire a community  
where everyone can thrive.



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We're proud to support the

**National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People,**

**and are committed to supporting nonprofits that  
help keep our communities livable and vibrant.**

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Member FDIC



**Congratulations  
Mark Hayward  
Excellence in Journalism  
By the Manchester NAACP.**

**NH News Guild: Fighting for journalists, fighting for journalism.**