

INTRODUCTION



There is an inherent worth in learning history and being able to connect it to the values of our modern society. This guide looks at our history through an anti-bias lens and focuses on the impact of the African American story on our culture today.

In 2002 the Amistad Bill was signed into law and required all boards of education in New Jersey to incorporate African American contributions and history into curricula in a cohesive manner; African American history is American history. The legislation also established New Jersey's Amistad Commission, which created a valuable online curriculum and resources. You can find these materials on the Commission's website at www.njamistadcurriculum.net.

This guide is intended to be complementary to the Commission's curriculum. Where the Amistad curriculum is focused on the history of African Americans from the times of ancient Africa to the present, this guide serves as a tool tying the law to the lessons of the Amistad. By taking a deeper look at the overt and covert impact of racism and empathy, equity and equality, class and justice, educators and students will come to understand the systemic themes which arise from African American history in this country.

Being trained in the use of the Amistad Commission's Curriculum, as well as the New Jersey State Bar Foundation's Guide will aid educators in fulfilling their responsibilities to integrate African American contributions and history into everyday curriculum. We hope that you will find all of these resources to be enlightening

Elissa Zylbershlag
Director of Conflict Resolution
and Anti-Bias Initiatives, New Jersey
State Bar Foundation

Lillie J. Edwards
Ph.D., Co-Chair, Curriculum
Committee, New Jersey Amistad
Commission

CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. Donnetrice Allison, Dr. Deirdre
Foreman, Scott Hirschfeld and
Elissa Zylbershlag

THANK YOU TO

David Harewood, Will Guzmán,
Debra Plafker, Tabitha Rodriguez
and Jodi Miller

The information in this publication is published as a public education service to help explain laws in New Jersey. It does not constitute legal advice, which can only be given by an attorney. This publication is sponsored by the New Jersey State Bar Foundation and made possible with funding from the IOLTA Fund of the Bar of New Jersey.

For information on all law-related programs for educators, visit www.njsbf.org.

© 2021 New Jersey State Bar Foundation