



ERASE Racism’s Annual Benefit Will Feature Award-Winning Journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones

Elaine Gross, Founder and President Emerita of ERASE Racism, announced today that the organization’s Annual Benefit will feature award-winning journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones. She will join Ms. Gross in an in-person “fireside chat” about the state of civil rights in New York and America today. The event will take place at the Garden City Hotel on Wednesday evening, June 3, 2026.

The event’s theme, “Our History Our Future,” is especially timely, as this is ERASE Racism’s 25th-anniversary year, and it’s the 250th-anniversary year of our nation. It’s, therefore, a time to reflect on how far we’ve come and how far we have to go. Ms. Hannah-Jones has a unique capacity to relate the history of civil rights to the present and the future.

Nikole Hannah-Jones is best-known as the creator of The 1619 Project, the award-winning ongoing initiative from The New York Times Magazine that began in August 2019, the 400th anniversary of the beginning of American slavery. The 1619 Project aims to reframe the country’s history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center of our national narrative.



The 1619 Project first appeared in The New York Times Magazine. It subsequently grew to include a book-length anthology of essays and poetry – titled *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* – as well as a podcast series, a children’s picture book, and a six-part documentary TV series that premiered on Hulu.

Nikole Hannah-Jones won the 2020 Pulitzer Prize for Commentary for her introduction to The 1619 Project. She won the 2022 NAACP Social Justice Impact Award.

The book – *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story* – was a #1 New York Times bestseller. It was named to Kirkus Reviews’ Best Nonfiction Books of the 21st Century and to Oprah Daily’s Best Nonfiction Books of the Past Two Decades. The picture book – *The 1619 Project: Born on the*

Water – was a #1 New York Times bestseller in the children’s picture book category. The documentary series won an Emmy for Outstanding Documentary or Nonfiction Series at the 75th Creative Arts Emmy Awards.

In her acceptance speech at the 53rd Annual NAACP Image Awards, Nikole Hannah-Jones said, “As of now, some 36 states have passed or are considering bills to make it harder to teach about racism and inequality. Politicians are using the power of the state to whitewash an already whitewashed history. Books and ideas about the black experience, about the LGBTQ community, are being banned. These anti-history laws go hand in hand with regressive policies that aim to restrict our civil and voting rights. A healthy society does not ban ideas, and attacks on books are an attack on democracy.”

“Nikole Hannah-Jones has had an extraordinary impact on public understanding of the history of slavery in America and its continuing impact today,” said Elaine Gross. “ERASE Racism is privileged to recognize her for her outstanding scholarship, her remarkable journalism, and her exceptional courage and commitment. She is truly a model for our nation.”