



Juneteenth: A Celebration of Freedom

Saturday, June 14th, 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Durand-Hedden House & Garden, 523 Ridgewood Rd.

Celebrate this important holiday on the beautiful grounds of Durand-Hedden House! This event highlights the themes of freedom, resistance, and remembering the past while looking towards the future. Learn about the holiday and the history of enslaved people in New Jersey through the amazing museum exhibit. Plus, the day is full of fun and engaging outdoor events, including historical reenactors, musical performances, face painting, crafts, and storytelling. [RSVP here](#).

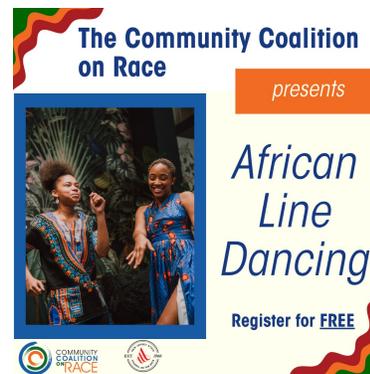


Integrated Art Circle: African Line Dancing

Saturday, June 14th, 12:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Durand-Hedden House & Garden, 523 Ridgewood Rd.

Join your friends and neighbors in our final Integrated Dance Circle on June 14th at the Juneteenth Celebration. Yahaya Kamate, a West African dancer and drummer who performed with the National Ballet of Côte d'Ivoire, will lead us in West African Traditional Dance. [RSVP here!](#)



June is National Homeownership Month!

This month underscores our mission to create racially, culturally, and socially integrated neighborhoods that are welcoming and inclusive for all. We recognize that fair access to homeownership is essential to closing racial wealth gaps and achieving true equity. What can you do to help?

- Share our website ChoosSOMA.com with prospective in-movers and realtors
- Share information about our [Wealth Gap Equalizer Loan](#) program
- Advocate for increased affordable housing options with local representatives (learn more at [Affordable Housing Alliance](#) and [Fair Share Housing Center](#))
- Get to know your neighbors! [Learn how here](#).



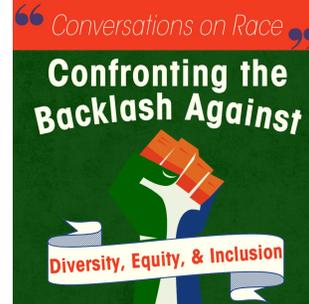
Conversations on Race Recap: Confronting the Backlash Against DEI

This was a powerful space for truth-telling and reflection on how to address critical diversity and equity issues here in South Orange and

Maplewood. The small-group discussions that followed made it clear that our community is ready to keep doing the work together.

[Read more here!](#)

Special thanks [Seton Hall University](#) for hosting us, and to our moderator and panel of speakers for their commitment to moving the conversation forward: Robert A. Marchman, Dr. Lori Brown, Maplewood Committee Member Dean Dafis, South Orange Committee Member Dr. Olivia Lewis-Chang, Assemblywoman Garnet Hall, and Dr. Kerri Waibel.



Please Consider a Donation Today!

If you haven't had a chance to give to our **Spring Appeal**, there's **still time!** your gift today will help sustain our work for integration, equity, and belonging right here in SOMA. [Donate here now.](#)



Integrated Art Circles Continue this summer with Mosaics

Tuesdays, July 15th – August 5th, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
646 Prospect St, Maplewood, NJ 07040

Led by teaching and exhibiting artist, Sandra Charlap, this circle will explore the art of mosaic design, and participants will create a mosaic for a public installation. Meet new people and learn a new art form together. [Register here today!](#)

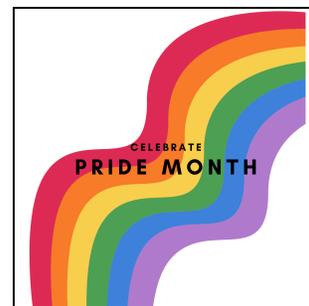


June Community Events of Interest...

North Jersey Pride Festival

Sunday, June 8th, 2025 – 12-6pm, Memorial Park, 580 Valley Street, Maplewood, NJ

This is one of the largest family-friendly Pride celebrations in the tristate, featuring a kids' stage with interactive shows, plus hundreds of vendors.



SOMA Action: Reclaim Our Flag Day

Saturday, June 14, noon to 2pm

This family-friendly event will begin at Floods Hill/Meadowland Park in South Orange. Honor Flag Day by reclaiming the flag on behalf of all that it represents: Juneteenth, Pride, Due Process, Immigrants' rights, and much more. [RSVP here.](#)



In case you missed it...

Seth Boyden Stepping Program

The Seth Boyden Elementary School has a stepping program that combines instruction in the physical movements of stepping with the history and cultural significance of the art form. Students learn various stepping movements and develop their own routines. [Have a look at their 2025 performance here!](#)

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DONATE



Visit our website

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