



Celebrating Integration—RSVP Today!

Thursday, October 16th, 7 pm, Orange Lawn Tennis Club

Our annual gala and fundraiser is on Thursday, October 16th at 7 pm at the Orange Lawn Tennis Club in South Orange. The evening includes dinner and drinks at Orange Lawn Tennis Club, live music and dancing with Essex Funk Collective, and a live auction. We are excited to announce that Audrey Rowe, our former program director, is this year's honoree. The evening will include a special memorial tribute to Carol Barry-Austin, founding member and Schools Committee leader for over two decades.

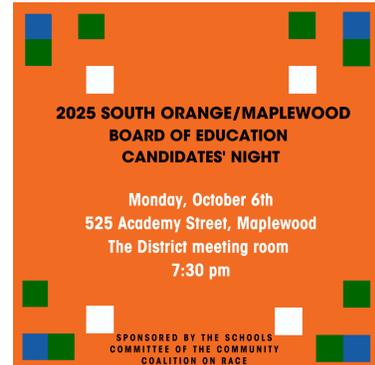
Please join us to honor and learn more about these two gifted women who have done so much to keep SOMA on the path to integration and equity. [Purchase individual tickets and table sponsorships here by October 10th.](#) To place a message or business ad in the journal (due by October 3rd), [click here.](#)



BOE Candidates' Forum

October 6th, 7:30 pm, SOMSD Meeting Room, 525 Academy St., Maplewood

The Schools Committee of the Coalition will host its annual BOE Candidates' Forum for the candidates running for the 3 open seats. This is an opportunity for voters to learn about the candidates' positions on the integration plan, equity policies, and their commitment to excellence and equity for all students at this critical time of challenge to diversity, equity, and inclusion. [Register here.](#)



Now More Than Ever: How All Students Benefit from Integrated Schools

November 12th, 7:30 pm, CHS Auditorium

The Schools Committee will host this forum featuring **Dr. Amy Stuart Wells**, professor at Columbia University whose research examines the intersection of racial inequality and educational policies. The committee will share a history of integration efforts in our district over the last few decades. We will look at progress to date and consider what's at stake in achieving racially integrated and equitable schools and classrooms. [RSVP here for this important presentation.](#)



SOMA Neighbors Connect

Thursday, November 13th, 7:00 pm, The Vic DeLuca Room, Maplewood Memorial Library

Join us for an engaging evening of dialogue on local issues. The evening will feature updates on the spaces and places where neighbors connect—from the greenway and bike lanes to the bike bus—as well as new information on neighborhood integration levels. Together, we'll explore how these local initiatives shape daily life and strengthen community bonds. This event is hosted by the Residential Committee which works to support residential racial integration, diversity, and inclusion in our towns. [Sign up here today!](#)



Join the Marketing Committee!

Stable racial integration relies on promoting the benefits of a diverse and inclusive community to current residents, potential homebuyers, business owners, and visitors. Our Marketing Committee raises awareness for the Coalition's mission and programs through public relations, targeted marketing, digital communications, and print publications. Volunteers with skills in writing, design, social media, content strategy, or marketing work with the staff and a professional publicist to tell the story of our welcoming community. [Click here to learn more and get involved!](#)



Two Wealth Gap Equalizer Loan Amounts Increased to \$15,000

We are excited to announce that we are increasing two of our Wealth Gap Equalizer Loans (WGEL) from \$7,500 to \$15,000. This change comes in response to rising housing costs in our towns and is designed to make homebuying more attainable for Black and non-White Hispanic families. [Learn more about the loan and application process here.](#)



ICE Abductions in SOMA: A Call for Justice, Dignity, and Community Solidarity

The Coalition reaffirms its commitment to fostering a community of equity, inclusion, and safety for every person who works in, visits, or calls SOMA home. [Read our statement and find out ways to take action here.](#)



In NJ News: New Jersey Law Mandates Latino and Hispanic History in School Curriculum

"Governor Phil Murphy has signed new legislation requiring Latino and Hispanic American history to be included in New Jersey's Student Learning Standards for Social Studies and English Language Arts. The law was sponsored by Senate Majority Leader

M. Teresa Ruiz, Senator Brian Stack, and Senator Angela V. McKnight." Hudpost. [Read more here.](#)



Also this month...

How Do We Stand Up for Justice and Equity in a Polarized Nation?

Thursday, October 2, 2025, 2:45 PM - 4:15 PM

With Claudia E. Cohen, Bonnie Berman Cushing, and Robert A. Marchman. [Register in advance here](#) for Oheb Shalom's Yom Kippur presentation on constructively addressing issues of injustice and inequality.

How Do We Stand Up For Justice and Equity In A Polarized Nation?



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