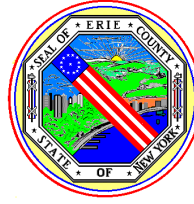


ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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Chairwoman April Baskin's Event, The Black Doll Exhibit, Showcases Black Beauty Nationally and Locally *Featured at the downtown Central Library, showcase of collectible dolls and art activities help promote representation, diversity, and inclusion to today's youth*

Buffalo, NY – For the second year in a row, Erie County Legislator April N.M. Baskin and local collector, Lisa Jacobs Watson are teaming up to present an exhibit that focuses on Black and Latina beauty using collectible dolls as their muse. Baskin began the event last year, which also featured paper dolls of local Black female civic leaders for young artists to color and design. This year's event will be held at the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library's Central Library location from February 25th through March 27th with a take home "Buffalo Black Female Leaders" coloring book for those interested.

The 2020 Black Doll Exhibit drew over 150 attendees and the concept of the doll show was to present inspiring images of Women of Color throughout American history. The target audience for the event is young women between the ages of 5 and 12, but all are welcome and encouraged to attend. This year, Baskin hopes the appeal is for families, doll collectors, and neighborhood residents to celebrate Black History Month in a safe, socially distanced way. The corresponding coloring book activity encourages creativity at home.

Legislator Baskin stated, "Partnering with our public library has made this event even more accessible to the public, and I'm always grateful for their support. We want to emphasize the importance of play and also of representation; young Black girls grow up to be strong Black women, and they need to know their true potential. I hope seeing these dolls and coloring images of our local leaders inspires the greatness that lies within them."

Lisa Jacobs Watson, Creative Manager, said, "I grew up loving dolls. Even as I outgrew them, I continued to admire their panache. As a mother, I was happy to introduce my young daughter to dolls as she became interested. Keeping abreast of fashion dolls prompted me to become a collector in the early 1990s. I now have close to a hundred dolls that I am eager to share by showing them off with opportunities like this one. Tying my dolls to Black History Month is an awesome way to show the younger generation to take pride in who you are, while playing and pretending."

"Last year's event was very much about embracing beauty. This year's will be a reminder to embrace the power already within ourselves. Our mission is to present an extraordinary display of dolls that bring together our past, present and future," **added Baskin**.

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