

JAN 29

Crown Conference: Can Public Policy End Hair Discrimination?

by Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers Universi...

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New Jersey is poised to become the third state to pass a CROWN Act, following California and New York City earlier this year.

About this Event

The purpose of the conference is to discuss, educate, and illuminate the need for a New Jersey bill known as the CROWN Act (Creating a Respectful and Open World for Naturals) to protect the rights of those who choose to wear their hair in natural (just the way it grows) hairstyles such as Afros, braids, twists, and locs, hairstyles commonly worn by people of African descent in the workplace and schools.

When a student athlete in Atlantic County, New Jersey was forced to cut off his hair or forfeit a wrestling match it sent shock waves across the state and across the nation. People of every race, ethnicity, age, gender, and sexual orientation were angered and appalled as they viewed the now infamous news footage video of coaches cutting the student's hair, a practice now referred to as hair discrimination and hair harassment which is often rooted in racism and structural violence. Nationally, reports of students being sent home because of their hairstyles, as well as professionals being passed over for employment or promotion due to the way their hair naturally grows have become ubiquitous.

New Jersey is poised to become the third state to pass a CROWN Act, following California and New York City earlier this year. The conference will touch on themes of public policy, public health, diversity, social justice, advocacy and will be open to the RU community and the community at large.

Moderated by Patricia O'Brien-Richardson, Ph.D., MS. Ed, Associate Professor of Teaching, Bloustein School

Panelists include

Sandra Cunningham, State Senator and Co-Sponsor of the bill

Angela McKnight, Assemblywoman and Co-Sponsor of the bill

Dr Bernice B. Rumala, Crown Campaign Co-founder

Shemekka Ebony Coleman, Crown Campaign Co-founder