

Black History Month highlights ‘Resistance and Persistence’

HOLYOKE — Holyoke Community College is celebrating Black History Month in February with a series of events that highlight the theme “Resistance and Persistence: Celebrating Black Leadership in Our Community.”

On Wednesday, Feb. 8, HCC alum and current Mount Holyoke College student Safiyah Bey of Springfield will lead a talk titled “Teaching and Learning as Resistance: The Truth School — Building Social Movements through Education.” That event will take place from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. in

the cafeteria on the second floor of the HCC Campus Center on the Homestead Avenue campus.

On Wednesday, Feb. 15, Billy McBride, associate athletic director for diversity and inclusion at Amherst College, will lead a talk titled “Black Resistance Through Sports: Combating Discrimination and Other Social Injustices,” from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. in the PeoplesBank Conference Room on the third floor of the HCC Kittredge Center for Business and Workforce Development.

On Wednesday, Feb. 22, from 11

a.m. to 12:15 p.m., in the Center for Excellence, on the second floor of HCC’s Frost Building, the college will host a panel discussion with Black business leaders as they share their personal stories of overcoming barriers to success. Panelists include Tony Bass, owner of City Beat Multi-Media Group in Springfield; Zee Johnson, owner of Olive Tree Books in Springfield; and Lenny Underwood, owner and founder of Underwood Photo and Upscale Socks in Springfield.

A Mass Humanities-sponsored

group reading of Frederick Douglass’ famous speech “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” will be staged 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. on March 1 in HCC’s Center for Excellence.

“I’m really excited about the diversity of events this year,” said college President Christina Royal. “There really is something for everyone who wants to engage, learn, and celebrate.”

HCC is also inviting students, faculty, staff, and members of the community at large to participate in a common read of the book “How the

Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America,” by Clint Smith. Electronic copies are available free as e-books through the HCC library.

HCC’s Black History Month committee is selling specially designed Black History Month T-shirts, sweatshirts, and hoodies to raise money for the annual Black Student Alliance Award, which is given annually to one member of the club.

To learn more about Black History Month months at HCC or to participate over Zoom, visit hcc.edu/bhm.