



**THE OFFICIAL DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER
FOR HEALTHFIRST FAMILY CARE CENTER, INC.**

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By: Emily Stoddard



Happy Holidays! It's that busy time of year again. For this newsletter we wanted to focus on some of the lesser known topics relating to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We hope you learn some information you may not have known much about before. As always, please contact our committee chair, Emily, at estoddard@healthfirstfr.org if you're interested in joining us!

Sincerely,
MOSAIC

Can you solve the riddle below? Answer is on the last page of the newsletter!

Two judo experts take a bow and the match begins. One is wearing a brown belt the other a black belt. After a long tussle, the black belter player has the most points and is declared the winner, even though during the entire contest no man threw the other to the ground. How can this be?

LAS POSADAS

By: *Ma Ferroza Reed*

Las Posadas is a religious festival celebrated in Mexico and parts of the U.S. during the Christmas season. Originating in Spain and introduced to Mexico in the 16th century, Las Posadas commemorates the journey of Mary and Joseph as they sought shelter on the eve of Jesus' birth. Lasting for nine nights, from December 16th to December 24th, this cultural celebration embraces the spirit of faith, compassion, and the love of family and friends.

During Las Posadas, local neighborhoods and churches organize processions that reenact the biblical story. Participants, led by individuals dressed as Mary and Joseph, walk from door to door, seeking lodging. As they sing traditional songs called "cánticos," they are turned away until finding the designated "inn."

Once the procession reaches the final destination, the community opens its doors to welcome Mary and Joseph. The house, beautifully decorated with nativity scenes and festive ornaments, becomes a center of merriment and spiritual reflection. Prayers are offered, hymns are sung, and the atmosphere fills with a profound sense of togetherness and gratitude.

One of the highlights of Las Posadas is the breaking of piñatas. These colorful, star-shaped creations symbolize the struggles and obstacles faced by Mary and Joseph on their journey. As children and adults take turns striking the piñata, it eventually breaks open, showering everyone with delightful treats and gifts. This joyful moment represents the triumph of light over darkness and reminds us of the blessings received through faith and perseverance.



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION

By: *Ma Ferroza Reed*

The International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust is observed annually on January 27th. The Holocaust was one of the darkest chapters in human history, during which six million Jewish people were systematically persecuted and murdered by the Nazi regime. However, this day serves not only as a reminder of the immense horrors endured but also as an opportunity to honor the resilience of those who survived and to educate future generations about the importance of peace, tolerance, and compassion.

Remembering the victims of the Holocaust is a solemn duty entrusted to us by history. It enables us to reflect upon the consequences of hatred, discrimination, and indifference that can lead to such tragic events. By learning from the past, we can work together to build a better future, free from prejudice and violence.

NEVER FORGET

On this day, numerous commemorative events take place worldwide, including exhibitions, documentaries, survivor testimonies, educational initiatives, and moments of silence. These events provide platforms for survivors to share their stories, ensuring that the memories of the victims live on and that their sacrifices are not forgotten.

As we honor the memory of the victims of the Holocaust, let us pledge to stand against discrimination, anti-Semitism, and all other forms of prejudice that threaten the harmony and wellbeing of our global community. Together, we can create a world where diversity is celebrated, compassion is fostered, and the lessons of history guide us toward a brighter future.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR TOLERANCE

By: *Ma Ferroza Reed*

International Day for Tolerance serves as a reminder to embrace our differences, foster mutual understanding, and reject discrimination in all its forms. It provides an opportunity for individuals and communities worldwide to reflect on the importance of tolerance and to take concerted actions that promote unity, harmony, and peaceful coexistence.

Tolerance is the foundation upon which understanding, empathy, and respect are built. In a world that continues to experience division and conflict, it is more crucial than ever to promote tolerance in all aspects of society.

This year, the International Day for Tolerance encourages us to embrace diversity. Our differences - be it in race, religion, culture, or beliefs - should not divide us, but instead enrich our lives and strengthen our communities.

In today's interconnected world, celebrating diversity goes beyond mere acceptance; it requires active engagement and genuine appreciation for different perspectives. By fostering an inclusive environment, we can create a harmonious society where individuals from all backgrounds feel valued and respected.



Here are a few ways you can contribute to promoting tolerance:

- **Educate Yourself:** Take the time to learn about different cultures, religions, and traditions. Understanding others' perspectives will help break down stereotypes and ignorance.
- **Promote Acceptance:** Encourage others to embrace diversity and challenge discriminatory attitudes or behaviors. Spread kindness, empathy, and compassion throughout your community.
- **Lead by Example:** Act as a role model for tolerance by demonstrating open-mindedness, kindness, and respect towards others. Small acts of tolerance can create ripple effects that inspire change in others.

Remember, tolerance is not limited to a single day but should be practiced every day. By embracing diversity and promoting tolerance, together, we can create a better, more peaceful world.

We hope this newsletter inspires you to take action and celebrate the International Day for Tolerance. Let us work hand in hand to build a future where everyone feels accepted.



DUTCH AMERICAN HERITAGE DAY

By: Emily Stoddard

The United States celebrates Dutch-American Heritage Day on November 16th annually. The Andrew Doria, a small American warship, sailed into the harbor of the Dutch colonized island of St. Eustatius in the West Indies on November 16, 1776. Several people from the Dutch community settled in New York and New Jersey before the English took over in 1664, calling it “New Netherlands.”

During WWII, Dutch and American servicemen fought side by side to defend the universal cause of freedom and democracy and have continued to stand together as NATO allies. Both countries also partnered up in the Persian Gulf and have maintained peace and security throughout Europe.

The people of Dutch ancestry have made important contributions to the American culture and history. The influence of our Dutch ancestors can still be seen in New York’s Hudson River Valley and the Schuylkill River in Pennsylvania. Generations of Dutch immigrants have come to the United States with the unique customs and traditions of their ancestral homeland. The Netherlands is a country that has given the world great artists, celebrated philosophers, and leaders of international business.

There are 3 presidents that were leaders of Dutch descent: Martin Van Buren, Theodore Roosevelt, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.



KOREAN AMERICAN DAY

By: Emily Stoddard



Korean American Day is celebrated annually on January 13th. This day commemorates the arrival of the first Korean immigrants to the U.S. This day also acknowledges and honors the contributions that Korean Americans have done for our society. Korean immigrants first arrived in the U.S. on January 13, 1903. Shortly before this, 102 Korean immigrants set sail for Honolulu, Hawaii. These families initiated the first wave of Korean immigration, resulting in over 7,500 immigrants over the next two years. After this even more Koreans decided to emigrate from their homeland in Korea.

Every year on January 13, the Korea Economic Institute of America (KEI) sponsors a luncheon in Washington D.C. to celebrate Korean American Day and recognize the local and national Korean American community. This event is recognized as one of the preeminent celebrations in Washington D.C. for Korean Americans. KEI has honored Korean-Americans from athletics, government, business, academia, humanitarian work, business and entrepreneurship, arts and literature.

Learn more about Korean Americans then and now. Read books about their experiences or watch documentaries.

- Korean American Pioneer Aviators: The Willows Airmen by Edward T. Chang and Woo Sung Han
- Korean-Americans: Past, Present, and Future by Ilpyong J. Kim
- Memoir of a Cashier: Korean Americans, Racism, and Riots by Carol Park

KWANZAA

By: *Emily Stoddard*

Kwanzaa is celebrated annually on December 26th. The name Kwanzaa means “first fruits” in Swahili. Every family celebrates Kwanzaa in its own unique way, but celebrations often include songs and dances, African drums, storytelling, poetry reading, and a large traditional meal. On each of the seven nights, the family gathers and a child lights one of the candles on the Kinara (candleholder), then one of the seven principles is discussed. The principles, called the Nguzo Saba (seven principles in Swahili) are values of African culture which contribute to building and reinforcing community among African-Americans. Kwanzaa also has seven basic symbols which represent values and concepts reflective of African culture.

These are the seven principles:

- **Unity:** To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.
- **Self-determination:** To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves.
- **Collective Work and Responsibility:** To build and maintain our community together and make our brother’s and sister’s problems our problems and to solve them together.
- **Cooperative Economics:** To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.
- **Purpose:** To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
- **Creativity:** To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
- **Faith:** To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

RECOMMENDED ENRICHMENT

- Las Posadas

<https://www.journeymexico.com/blog/posadas-in-mexico-christmas-tradition>

- International Day of Commemoration

<https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/international-holocaust-remembrance-day>

- International Day for Tolerance

<https://nationaltoday.com/international-day-for-tolerance/>

- Dutch American Heritage Day

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch_Americans

- Korean Heritage Day

<https://nationaltoday.com/korean-american-day/>

- Kwanzaa

<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/kwanzaa-history>

RIDDLE ANSWER

Both judo experts were women.

This is an example of gender bias. It’s important to be aware our own biases when we reflect on decisions made and whether bias came into the process. This helps us to become more aware of our biases. Whilst it’s hard to see bias in ourselves, we can spot it in others. Once you are familiar with the key biases that impact work performance, aim to be more open in your meetings and create an environment of ‘permission to challenge’ on possible biases.