



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
Knowledge • Mindfulness • Behavior

DEI Newsletter

Volume 8 — May 2022

Created By: Dr. Devon Smith, Dr. Carrie Horn, & Dr. Jennifer Taylor-Cousar, Liz Kellermeyer

Editor: Dr. Devon Smith

Events & Updates

- In commemoration of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, NNLM is hosting a panel discussion with the Asian Health Coalition to highlight [“The Importance of Precision Medicine and AANHPIs Through the Health Equity Lens”](#) on May 31 6:00 p.m. MDT
 - [PrideFest](#) June 25 and 26 at Civic Center Park
 - [Juneteenth Music Festival](#) June 18 and 19 in the Five Points neighborhood
 - Reminder: Recordings of all previous DEI lectures can be found here: <https://www.nationaljewish.org/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/news-resources/recorded-presentations>
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Monthly Holidays & Recognitions

March - June 2022



Recently Recognized DEI Dates:

March 2022

- Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
- Gender Equality Month
- National Women’s History Month



April 2022

This year held a rare event where [three major religions](#), Easter (Christian), Passover (Jewish), and Ramadan (Muslim), all occurred within the same time-period. This phenomenon happens only every 30 years or so. The history of these holidays is too expansive for a single newsletter to do justice to them all. You are encouraged to take a minute to learn something new about the holidays your colleagues may be celebrating.

- Earth Month
- Arab American Heritage Month
- April 2 – World autism awareness day
- April 2 – Beginning of Ramadan
- April 15 – Beginning of Passover
- April 17 – Easter
- April 21 – Beginning of Ridván
- April 22 – Earth Day
- April 23 – End of Passover

May 2022

May serves as the month to recognize our friends and colleagues with National Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and escalated racial bias and trauma towards individuals of Asian heritage. These hate-crimes have added to the mental stressors of the past two years. In an effort to highlight the positive, learn about some of the amazing accomplishments of Asian Americans including but certainly not limited to Americans of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Pacific Islander, and Hawaiian descent.

- National Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- Indian Heritage Month
- Mental Health Awareness Month
- Speech and Hearing Awareness Month
- Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month (recognizing health care disparities)
- May 2 – End of Ramadan
- May 30 – Memorial Day

Upcoming DEI Dates:

June 2022

June brings awareness to the ongoing discrimination faced by members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer community. Can you believe that it was not until 2015 that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that all state bans on same-sex marriage were unconstitutional thereby making gay marriage legal across the country? If you want to learn more and support your local LGBTQ+ community, Denver's [PrideFest](#) will occur on June 25 and 26 at Civic Center Park.

- June also recognizes Juneteenth, the day in 1865 that Union soldiers landed in Galveston, Texas with news that the Civil War was over and that all enslaved people were now free. [Celebrations](#) in Denver will be in the Five Points neighborhood June 18 through June 19.
- National Caribbean American Heritage Month
- LGBTQ+ Pride Month
- Black Music Month
- June 19 – Juneteenth
- June 21 – National Indigenous People's Day
- June 28 – Pride Day

Additional Training for LGBTQ + Patient Care Training:

- LGBTQ+ Healthcare Cultural Competency Training: <https://www.outcarehealth.org/training/>
- LGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency for Clinicians: <https://usc.libwizard.com/f/LGBTQculturalcompetencyclinicians>

May Spotlight: The Power of Words

Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me. - 9th century English saying

Many of us that grew up in the United States learned this phrase as a defense against bullying and teasing on the playground. The idea behind use of the phrase was to help kids build resilience and ignore hurtful rhetoric. While on the very surface, the idea of learning how to move on from verbal assaults seems sensible; the truth is that words *do* matter. Words can and do cause significant emotional trauma every day. Sometimes this inflicted trauma is intentional and is without a doubt hate speech. Much more often though, we repeat phrases and expressions learned over our lifetime that may seem innocent enough yet frequently have racist or bigoted historical roots. These words cause trauma without intent. Most of us do not wish to cause our colleagues pain and want to do better.

One specific example of this is the use of the term, “model minority.” The term “minority” has been long used to represent persons of color, as well as other groups that have been socially marginalized (e.g., LGBTQ community members). However, this term should not be used in and of itself. (Refer to the excellent [AMA-AAMC equity guide](#) for an explanation and additional terminology that should be replaced in your daily conversation and professional writing.) The term “model minority” has two different uses in current language, both of which are harmful. The first use of model minority refers to an individual of color who has exceptional performance, such that they are being held up as a shining example of behavior to others of color, usually to meet white, Western standards of appearance. The reality is that the individuals often being called “model minorities” are exceptional individuals who deserve respect and acknowledgement of their skills; their decision to conform or not conform to white, Western standards is not relevant to their performance nor should it be touted as a point of emulation.

The second, more common use of the term “model minority” is around holding an entire racial or ethnic group in comparison to another. In the United States, this term is frequently used to highlight Asian American individuals as a successful racial group in comparison to other groups, often Latinx or Black Americans. This model is fraught with many inaccurate stereotypes that have lasting negative effects on macro and micro levels. In local communities, this model can have adverse impacts based on the fact that it creates bias in the development and implementation of government programs. The model can also have harmful effects on an individual level when someone is classified into a “good” or “bad” racial or ethnic group. It can also affect an individual’s self-image when they do not conform to the expected stereotype. Any form of stereotyping involves bias, and bias can lead to discrimination and outright hateful actions.

The power of words cause harm that can accumulate over time, even when each individual event may not seem like a big deal. An [educational video](#) shows how the repeated use of even subtly biased wording can have a compounding and lasting effect on someone. *Words have the power to both destroy and heal. When words are both true and kind, they can change our world. – Anonymous*

Educational Resources

[A Queer History of the United States by Michael Bronski](#)

"A Queer History of the United States is groundbreaking and accessible. It looks at how American culture has shaped the LGBT, or queer, experience, while simultaneously arguing that LGBT people not only shaped but also were pivotal in creating our country. Using numerous primary documents and literature, as well as social histories, Bronski's book takes the reader through the centuries--from Columbus' arrival and the brutal treatment the Native peoples received, through the American Revolution's radical challenging of sex and gender roles--to the violent, and liberating, 19th century--and the transformative social justice movements of the 20th. Bronski's book is filled with startling examples of often ignored or unknown aspects of American history: the ineffectiveness of sodomy laws in the colonies, the prevalence of cross-dressing women soldiers in the Civil War, the effect of new technologies on LGBT life in the 19th century, and how rock music and popular culture were, in large part, responsible for the great backlash against gay rights in the late 1970s. More than anything, A Queer History of the United States is not so much about queer history as it is about all American history--and why it should matter to both LGBT people and heterosexuals alike"-- Provided by publisher.

[Heart of Fire: An Immigrant Daughter's Story by Mazie Hirono](#)

"Mazie Hirono is one of the most fiercely outspoken Democrats in Congress, but her journey to the U.S. Senate was far from likely. Raised poor on her family's rice farm in rural Japan, Hirono was seven years old when her mother left her abusive husband and sailed with her two elder children to the United States, crossing the Pacific in steerage in search of a better life. Though the girl then known as "Keiko" did not speak English when she entered school in Hawaii, she would go on to hold state and national office, winning election to the U.S. Senate in 2012. This intimate and inspiring memoir traces her remarkable life from her upbringing in Hawaii, where the family first lived in a single room in a Honolulu boarding house while her mother worked two jobs to keep them afloat; to her emergence as a highly effective legislator whose determination to help the most vulnerable was grounded in her own experiences of economic insecurity, lack of healthcare access, and family separation. Finally, it chronicles her evolution from dogged yet soft-spoken public servant into the fiery critic and advocate we know her as today. For the vast majority of Mazie Hirono's five decades in public service, even as she fought for the causes she believed in, she strove to remain polite and reserved. Steeped in the non-confrontational cultures of Japan and Hawaii, and aware of the expectation that women in politics should never show an excess of emotion, she had schooled herself to bite her tongue, even as her male colleagues continually underestimated her. After the 2016 election, however, it was clear that she could moderate herself no longer. In the face of an autocratic administration, Hirono was called to at last give voice to the fire that had always been inside her. The moving and galvanizing account of a woman coming into her own power over the course of a lifetime in public service, and of the mother who encouraged her immigrant daughter's dreams, Heart of Fire is the story of a uniquely American journey, written by one of those fighting hardest to ensure that a story like hers is still possible"-- Provided by publisher..

[The Making of Asian America by Erika Lee](#)

Tells the little-known history of Asian Americans and their role in American life, from the arrival of the first Asians in the Americas to the present-day. An epic history of global journeys and new beginnings, this book shows how generations of Asian immigrants and their American-born descendants have made and remade Asian American life in the United States.

[The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down : A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures by Anne Fadiman](#)

Explores the clash between a small county hospital in California and a refugee family from Laos over the care of Lia Lee, a Hmong child diagnosed with severe epilepsy. Lia's parents and her doctors both wanted what was best for Lia, but the lack of understanding between them led to tragedy.

[American Islamophobia : Understanding the Roots and Rise of Fear by Khaled A. Beydoun](#)

Though many speak of Islamophobia's roots in racism, have we considered how anti-Muslim rhetoric is rooted in our legal system? Using his unique lens as a critical race theorist and law professor, Khaled A. Beydoun captures the many ways in which law, policy, and official state rhetoric have fueled the frightening resurgence of Islamophobia in the United States.

[Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning by Cathy Park Hong](#)

Poet and essayist Cathy Park Hong fearlessly and provocatively blends memoir, cultural criticism, and history to expose fresh truths about racialized consciousness in America. Part memoir and part cultural criticism, this collection is vulnerable, humorous, and provocative.

The library team has built a wonderful collection of D&I books that are available for staff and faculty to check out for personal use at the Tucker Medical Library (catalogue: <http://bit.ly/njdiversity>).

30-Day Challenge

One of the most powerful ways to combat bias is to educate yourself. The University of Colorado School of Medicine has a great [30-day Anti-Racism Challenge](#) with included links for each day's topic.

Not able to do the full 30-Day Challenge right now?

Here are two recommendations for February:



- [Understanding White Rage](#): Watch Dr. Carol Anderson, Charles Howard Candler Professor and Chair of African American Studies present White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Nation's Divide
- [Understanding Race and Medicine](#): Watch the American Medical Association's Panel entitled "Examining Race-Based Medicine | Prioritizing Equity"

Getting Involved

- If you have a passion around DEI work, we are always interested in fresh ideas. Email [Dr. Taylor-Cousar](#) or [Dr. Carrie Horn](#).
- To get involved in the production of this newsletter or share ideas/suggestions for future newsletters, please contact [Dr. Devon Smith](#).



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