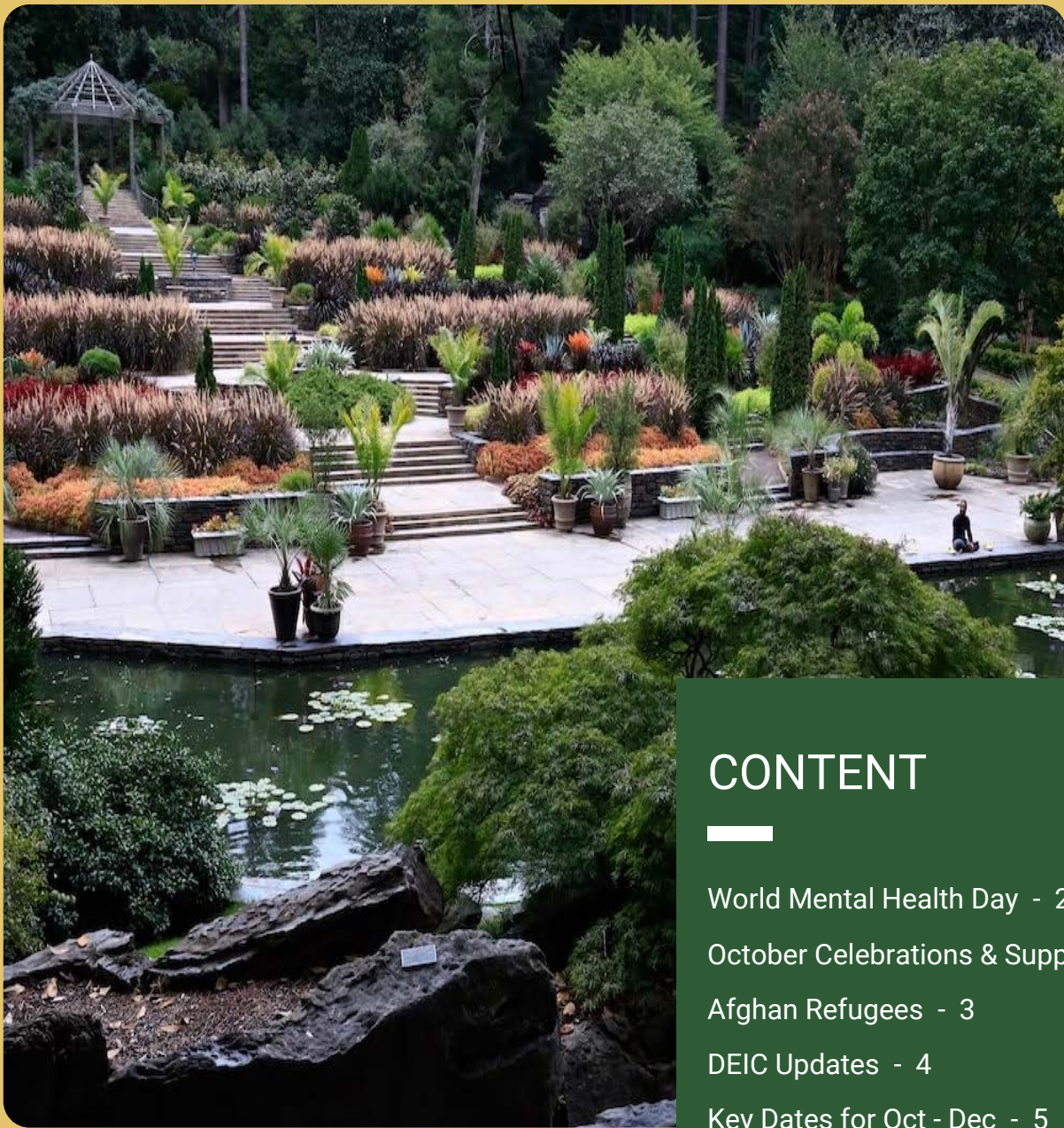


The Department of
Population Health
Sciences presents the

DEI NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER - DECEMBER



Landscape of the Terrace Gardens at the Sarah P. Duke Gardens in mid-September 2021. Photo by Karen Webbink.

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During the months of October, November, and December, we would like to celebrate World Mental Health Day and National Coming Out Day, as well as highlight timely topics, such as supporting Afghan refugees.

Continue reading on for all this and more, including an update on what the DEI Committee is working on!





OCTOBER 10

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

October 10th was World Mental Health Day. The overall objective of World Mental Health Day is to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health. The Day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR ALL: LET'S MAKE IT A REALITY

The theme of World Mental Health Day 2021 was "Mental health care for all: let's make it a reality." The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on people's mental health. Some groups, including health and other frontline workers, students, people living alone, and those with pre-existing mental health conditions, have been particularly affected. And services for mental, neurological and substance use disorders have been significantly disrupted.

During the World Health Assembly in May 2021, governments from around the world recognized the need to scale up quality mental health services at all levels. Delegates to the World Health Assembly endorsed the Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2030, including the plan's updated implementation options and indicators. For the first time, the plan includes an indicator on preparedness for providing mental health and psychosocial support during emergencies.

Resources:

[Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2030](#)

[WHO Mental Health Resources](#)

[Local Mental Health Resources](#)

"Self-care is how you take your power back."

– Lalah Delia





OCTOBER CELEBRATIONS

October 19th was International Pronouns Day! International Pronouns Day began in 2018 and occurs each year on the third Wednesday in October. The goal is to make sharing, respecting, and educating about personal pronouns commonplace. In a previous DPHS townhall meeting, Christy Zigler and Ian Horn gave a fantastic presentation emphasizing the importance of referring to people—particularly transgender and gender nonconforming people—by the pronouns they determine for themselves. We encourage you to review that presentation [here](#) (at 25:53).

Last month, we also recognized National Coming Out Day (NCOD)! NCOD is observed annually on October 11th to celebrate members of the LGBTQ community coming out and to raise awareness of the LGBTQ civil rights movement. The first NCOD was in 1988, inaugurated by activists Robert Eichberg and Jean O'Leary. October 11th was chosen as the anniversary of the 1987 March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights. In the U.S., NCOD events are sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign, as part of their National Coming Out Project. This project offers resources in support of LGBTQ individuals and families living free and open lives. While NCOD is traditionally a celebratory day, it is important to recognize that coming out may not always be safe for LGBTQ individuals who are part of multiple marginalized communities. We encourage you to read Preston Mitchum's article, "[On National Coming Out Day, Don't Disparage the Closet](#)," published in *The Atlantic* in 2013, for this perspective.

SUPPORTING AFGHAN REFUGEES

In just the next six months, approximately 1,169 Afghan refugees will be resettled to North Carolina, including the city of Durham. For many in North Carolina, that may seem like a big change, but North Carolina has a rich history of diversity. As of this year, immigrant residents make up about 8.2 percent of North Carolina's population. In Durham, that number is even higher, with 14.2 percent of the population being foreign born. [Read more here](#) about what Duke and Durham are doing to help welcome and support Afghan refugees.



What we can do to support refugees:

Make donations to organizations such as:

- [House of Mercy](#), which distributes food and clothing weekly in Durham.
- [CWS Durham](#), which provides support with housing, legal assistance, case management, mental health support, medical care, employment and school enrollment

Study up and practice bystander intervention:

- Read more about [five stages that people may experience when intervening](#)
- [Develop your skills to intervene](#) including learning about protecting yourself during interventions, intervening effectively, and remembering the "3 D's" of intervention: Distract, Direct, Delegate.



DEI COMMITTEE UPDATES

SubCommittee #1 (Building Community & Safe Spaces), hosted the Mental Health & Wellbeing Connections & Conversation Event on October 7th and has been drafting this newsletter, as well as plans for the new year. We're also celebrating the new accessible automatic side door and incoming elevator at the Imperial Building!

SubCommittee #2 (Hiring, Promotion & Retention), has been working on externally sharing the Staff Hiring Toolkit, integrating feedback from the SOM DEI strategic plan, setting up subcommittee onboarding resources for new members, and shifting focus to faculty hiring.

SubCommittee #3 (DEI Trainings) has finalized the DEI Foundational Training LMS Courses and, as of November 1st, 82 department members (faculty, staff, and students) have completed at least one course, and 35 have completed at least 4 out of the 6 courses. Two DEI Foundational Training Roundtable Discussions have occurred and were successful. The focus in the new year will be to hold a training to practically address how department members can respond to microaggressions.

SubCommittee #4 (Resources & Recommendations), has disseminated and begun educating department members about the Reporting Structure resource, What You Do Matters flyer, and the DPHS Commitment to an Inclusive Environment.

SubCommittee #6 (DEI & DPHS Education Programs), has been developing the BRIDGE Program: The first BRIDGE Program cohort completed the summer institute and have continued working with BRIDGE mentors on research and professional development activities. This subcommittee will be recruiting two trainees to join them in the new year.

DEIC MEMBERSHIP TRANSITIONS



As of October 29th, Erin Daniell (pictured) stepped off the DEIC to pursue another role outside of Duke. We're extremely grateful for all her time and effort towards DEI work both within and outside the DEI Committee.

In anticipation of other DEIC member's terms ending in 2022, we've begun recruiting for new members and plan to welcome eight new members, including two student members, in the new year!



KEY DATES FOR OCT - DEC

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

October is LGBT History Month.

October is Global Diversity Awareness Month.

October 6-14: Navaratri, the nine-day festival celebrating the triumph of good over evil. It worships God in the form of the universal mother commonly referred to as Durga, Devi or Shakti, and marks the start of fall.

October 11: National Indigenous Peoples Day, an alternative celebration to Columbus Day, gives recognition to the indigenous populations affected by colonization.

October 20: Sikh Holy Day, the day Sikhs celebrate Sri Guru Granth Sahib, their spiritual guide.

November is National Native American Heritage Month

November is National Family Caregivers Month

November 4: Diwali, the Hindu, Jain and Sikh five-day festival of lights celebrates new beginnings and the triumph of good over evil and lightness over darkness.

November 20: Transgender Day of Remembrance, established in 1998 to memorialize those who have been killed as a result of transphobia and to raise awareness of the continued violence endured by the transgender community.

November 26: Native American Heritage Day, held annually the Friday after Thanksgiving, encourages Americans of all backgrounds to observe and honor Native Americans through appropriate ceremonies and activities. The day was signed into law by George W. Bush in 2008.

November 28-December 6: Hanukkah, a Jewish holiday that is celebrated around the world for eight days and nights. Hanukkah celebrates the victory of the Maccabees, or Israelites, over the Greek-Syrian ruler, Antiochus, approximately 2,200 years ago.

November 28- December 24 Advent, a Christian season of celebration leading up to the birth of Christ.

December 1: World AIDS Day, commemorating those who have died of AIDS, and to acknowledge the need for a continued commitment to all those affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

December 3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities, designed to raise awareness in regards to persons with disabilities in order to improve their lives and provide them with equal opportunity.

December 8: Bodhi Day, the Buddhist holiday that commemorates the day that the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama (Shakyamuni), experienced enlightenment, also known as bodhi in Sanskrit and Pali.

December 10: International Human Rights Day, established by the United Nations in 1948 to commemorate the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

December 21: Yule Winter Solstice, celebrated by Pagans and Wiccans. The shortest day of the year represents a celebration focusing on rebirth, renewal and new beginnings as the sun makes its way back to the Earth. A solstice is an astronomical event that happens twice each year when the sun reaches its highest position in the sky.

December 25: Christmas Day, the day that many Christians associate with Jesus' birth.

December 26-January 1: Kwanzaa, an African-American holiday started by Maulana Karenga in 1966 to celebrate universal African-American heritage.



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