

DEPARTMENT OF POPULATION HEALTH SCIENCES PRESENTS

DEI NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2023 - MARCH 2023



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*Keep
Durham
Beautiful!*

Join an upcoming day of service effort to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. -

- **Litter pickup at ATT Mile 1 with Durham YMCA on Friday, January 20**
- **Vine clearing at Geer Cemetery on Saturday, January 21**

For more information, visit [THIS](#) page

Celebrations

Jewish Birthday of Trees



TU B'SHEVAT OR ROSH HASHANAH LA'ILANOT

is a Jewish holiday occurring on 5th- 6th February and is celebrated as “New Year for the trees,” in Jewish tradition.

A few of the ways it is typically celebrated are physically planting trees in Israel, making contributions to the Jewish National Fund, which uses the donations to plant trees in Israel, eating fruits and grains that remind us of the Land of Israel, especially what are known as the “seven species”: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates.

Learn more about this celebration [HERE](#)

OSTARA

Ostara marks the Spring Equinox, which happens between March 19 -23. Ostara is a pagan celebration of the German goddess Eostre and the origins of the Christian celebration of Easter. As the beginning of spring, Ostara is a good time to literally and figuratively plant seeds for the future.

A few of the ways to celebrate Ostara - planting seeds for a vegetable garden or flower garden, spring clean your house, take a nature walk with loved ones and look for signs of spring, take time to meditate/journal and think about your intentions for the next few weeks as it relates to the goals you want to achieve.

Learn more about this celebration [HERE](#)



Spring Equinox

Celebrations

*Festival
of colors*



HOLI

Holi has been celebrated in the Indian subcontinent for centuries. It marks the beginning of spring after a long winter, symbolic of the triumph of good over evil. This year, it will be celebrated on March 8th.

On the eve of the festival, large pyres are lit in many parts of India to signify the burning of evil spirits. People often throw wood, dried leaves and twigs into bonfires. On the day of Holi, entire streets and towns turn red, green and yellow as people throw colored powder into the air and splash them on others. Each color carries a meaning. Learn more about the festival [HERE](#)

2023 HOLI EVENTS AROUND THE TRIANGLE

- 1.** Holi was first celebrated on UNC campus in 2008 by Hindu Yuva as an event for its members. In 2009, The UNC Campus began to collaborate with Yuva to make it a campus wide event. Over time, it has evolved into its own entity as Holi Moli UNC. Details on the 2023 event can be found [HERE](#)
- 2.** Town of Morrisville has organized a Holi event on Saturday, March 18, from 12 am – 2 pm, at the Cedar Fork Community Center (CFCC). The event is free, and will feature dancing, Holi powders, and food for purchase. More details can be found [HERE](#)

Guest column

STRENGTHENING FOUNDATIONS, BREAKING NEW GROUND

BY TOMI AKINYEMIJU

My family and I spent the holiday break at the beach this year. Despite the overcast sky and extreme fog, the sound of the waves and smell of the ocean air worked its magic....my brain calmed, my heartbeat slowed, and I forgot about my 25 to-do lists with its 10,000 action items



Next to the ocean (any ocean) is where I find the space to reflect and appreciate the people around me and the work we do together, and to marvel at how far we have come. In the day to day, we are busy putting out fires, connecting people across places and spaces, and making the extremely complex, simpler and seamless. By the ocean is where I fully appreciate that these activities cumulatively have positive and transformational impact; in DPHS, we have made an already strong foundation even more solid by cultivating a culture of respect, inclusion and belonging where every member of our team has an opportunity to thrive and be present as their full self. We have done that together through each of our individual choices, as teams, with the unwavering support of our chair, Lesley Curtis, and the tireless work of our DEI committee. We have built that together.

As I consider what is ahead for 2023 and beyond, I feel confident that we have built a strong foundation for advancing our groundbreaking work in the department and across Duke and the communities that we serve. As we continue to strengthen our departmental culture, enhance the diversity of our staff, faculty, and trainees, and promote equity, we can have a lasting positive influence across all the domains we encounter, and I cannot wait to see what's ahead for us.

DUKE UNIVERSITY DEI EVENTS 2023

**JAN
24**

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

11 am, online with keynote speaker: [Rakim Brooks](#),
President of Alliance for Justice. Details [HERE](#)

**JAN
27**

IDENTITIES IN THE WORKPLACE: VIRTUAL NETWORKING EVENT 2023

11 am - 1 pm, virtually. More info [HERE](#)

**FEB
28**

GENDER STUDIES NOW - THERE'S A DISCO BALL BETWEEN US : A THEORY OF BLACK GAY LIFE

5-6 pm at East Duke Parlors

**MARCH
8**

FILM SCREENING : NASRIN

7-9 pm at Smith Warehouse Bay 4, The Ahmadieh
Family Le

**MARCH
22**

EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE LECTURE FEATURING SHANTEL E. MEEK

3pm - 4:30pm at Sanford 223, Rhodes
Conference Room

Social Equity Book Club

THE CITY OF RALEIGH'S DEPARTMENT OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE RALEIGH HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION HOSTS THE FOLLOWING 2023 SOCIAL EQUITY VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB EVENTS:

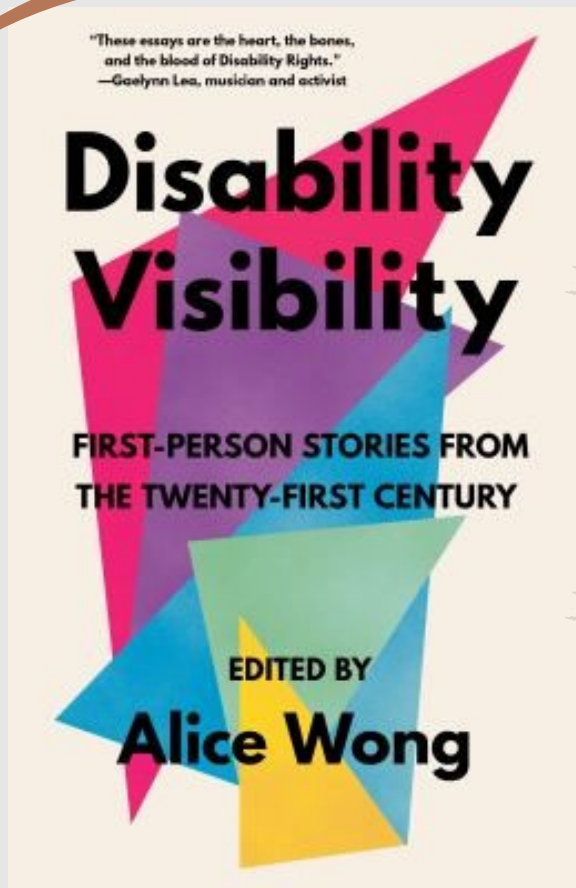
"Killers of the Dream" by Lillian Smith

Part 1, Thursday, March 9, 2023 from 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm

To join Part 1 of the discussion,
please follow the Zoom link and register [HERE](#).

Part 2, Thursday, March 16, 2023 from 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm

To join Part 2 of the discussion, please follow the Zoom link and register
[HERE](#).



Duke University Libraries - Book Club

Duke Libraries' online Low Maintenance Book Club will be reading parts of *Disability Visibility* by Alice Wong in March to coincide with Disability Awareness month. For more information on this upcoming Zoom-based opportunity, please send an [email to the book club leader](#) or watch for information to be posted on [their website](#) in early 2023.

REMEMBER YOUR WHY!

BY ISA GRANADOS, PHD STUDENT

Do you remember your admissions letter or cover letter to our Population Health Department? The one that shared in detail where you come from, where you are now, and where you're going. The one full of enthusiasm and purpose. Your "why" was so clear.

Right now, you might be knee deep in a grant application, anxious about classes, or having imposter syndrome about being at Big Duke. You might be far, far from your "why". That's how I feel often. In these times, reminding myself about my "why" has helped me regroup and reorient myself and my work.



So what is my why --- Now, I am reminded of my "why" through my part-time job with the Population Health Division at Durham County Department of Public Health. As a former community health worker, I feel at home working with this group, promoting health initiatives at the local level. This work has connected with my studies and research at Duke, too. I've had the opportunity to contribute to the county's Community Health Assessment and the Comunidad Latina survey. I plan on apply what I learned in analytic methods courses to help analyze the 2022 Community Health Assessment survey results, which will determine the county's top 5 health priorities for the next 3 years.

Housed at DCo's Population Health Division is Partnership for a [Healthy Durham](#), a county-wide partnership of community members, service providers, elected officials, university researchers, and others who come together to rally behind prioritized health issues identified in the community health assessment. As a member of the Partnership, I've been able to see how these health priorities are addressed across organizations in Durham. Serving as a committee member in the Partnership is phenomenal way to get show up at the table with other population health leaders in our community. In my role, I also lead Durham County's NCCARE360 Taskforce, which provides local, community-based governance for the first year of utilization of NCCare360 in Durham County.

My work with the Population Health Division at Durham County Department of Public Health helps me have perspective on my graduate studies, and helps me remember my "why". I hope you all can ground your work in your "why".

If you are interested in getting more involved with Partnership for a Healthy Durham, consider joining one of the five committees which focus on: Affordable Housing, Access to Healthcare and Health Insurance, Poverty, Mental Health, and Obesity, Diabetes & Food Access. Students, you may be interested in an internship with the Population Health Division at Durham County Department of Public Health. Please reach out to me if you want to learn more about it!

COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENT

GEER CEMETERY TOUR AND CLEANUP APRIL 3RD AT 2PM

The DPHS DEI Committee invites you to join in a spring cleanup of Durham's Geer Cemetery.

Volunteering will involve picking up branches, cutting vines, and removing litter in this historic cemetery. In addition to helping tidy the area, we will learn more about this final resting place of many of the earliest generations of African Americans in Durham.

According to the Friends of Geer Cemetery website -

“The act of maintaining, preserving, and protecting the cemetery makes the space visible and available to the community. Programs, educational sessions, and other events reveal how the cemetery was founded, used, and eventually neglected. Telling stories and educating others about the space is as much a part of keeping the cemetery alive as sharing the hard work of reclaiming the physical grounds.”

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity! Sign up online by March 27 to save your spot.



HAYTI WALKING TOUR

This event was a HUGE success. See the pictures from the day HERE

We are planning an interactive game-ified walking experience where individual participants or teams explore Durham downtown's history, monuments and sites of civic engagement. This event is slated for spring - summer 2023. More details soon!



DEI SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

SUBCOMMITTEE #1 (BUILDING COMMUNITY & SAFE SPACES)

Subcommittee #1 has been busy crafting this quarter's newsletter, and planning community-building events. Upcoming opportunities for spring and summer include a second tour with the Hayti Heritage Center, and an afternoon of volunteer cleanup at a local historic cemetery. We are over the moon about the addition of DPHS students Becca Fillipo and Jim Lopez to SC#1!

SUBCOMMITTEE #2 (HIRING, PROMOTION & RETENTION)

Subcommittee #2 has bid adieu to wonderful members who rotated off of the subcommittee, updated priorities based on helpful feedback from leadership, and begun to collect and review materials that could be helpful for a future faculty hiring toolkit. We are also excited to welcome Ekaterina "Kate" Thompson and Lauren Brinkley-Rubinstein to our subcommittee.

SUBCOMMITTEE #3 (DEI TRAININGS)

Subcommittee #3 is working to put together 2-3 additional educational opportunities in 2023. We are using the past climate surveys to guide our work. We are also exploring ways to organize all the resources and training opportunities available to employees at DPHS, including building a repository of trainings across Duke campus and the community. We are excited to welcome Cody Neshteruk to our subcommittee.

SUBCOMMITTEE #4 (REPORTING, TRANSPARENCY AND EVALUATION)

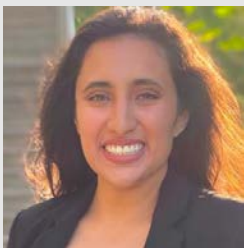
Subcommittee 4 has finalized an outline of the DEI evaluation rubric for DPHS. The goal is to evaluate DEI impact across 4 domains: representation, policies & practices, education, and environment. Next steps are to collaborate with respective domain owners for data collection and creation of a report. We are excited to welcome Leslie Zapata Leiva to our subcommittee.

SUBCOMMITTEE #5 (DEI & DPHS EDUCATION PROGRAMS)

The BRIDGE (Building Research Inclusion and Diversity in Graduate Education) Program is excited to have opened applications for our 2023-24 cohort of scholars! We'll be accepting applications through March 31st. In the meantime, we're excited to coordinate professional development opportunities unique to the needs of our current cohort of scholars this spring. We're grateful to all the mentors who help make this program happen and are excited to expand our network of scholars to further support a diverse and talented workforce equipped to improve population health. Subcommittee #5 is also excited to welcome Clare Meernik, Postdoctoral Associate, to our subcommittee!

WELCOME

We're delighted to welcome new members of DEI Committee. From left to right Leslie Zapata Leiva, Ekaterina Thompson, Clare Meernik, Jennifer Thomas, Jim Lopez (student), Becca Fillipo (student), Lauren Brinkly-Rubinstein, Cody Neshteruk



DEI ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENT

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work is vital, and requires our continuous collective input. We appreciate everyone who has helped in small or large ways, individually or in teams, to make our department more welcoming and inclusive

There is a lot more to be done, but first we celebrate the outstanding work of our DEI committee and their accomplishments over the past 2 years! A snapshot is attached, and please check out our [DEI webpage](#) for more details.

We are also excited to announce that Michael Fern has been named the Staff DEI lead for DPHS, and will be co-chairing the DEI committee.

The collage consists of 15 numbered items:

- 1. Quarterly Newsletters**: DEI NEWSLETTER (JANUARY - MARCH) featuring a colorful illustration of a woman's face.
- 2. Department of Population Health Sciences**: New Faculty Welcome to DPHS! featuring photos of Suur Debrah Ayangeakaa, PhD; Lauren Brinkley-Rubinstein, PhD; Semra Ozdemir, PhD; and LaShaunta "Tay" Glover.
- 3. Department of Population Health Sciences**: BRIDGE Program Building Research Inclusion and Diversity in Graduate Education. Features photos of Tyrone Bellamy, MPH; Zhanel Jackson, MA; New Ben Khadija; Karolita K. Harris, EdD, RN; Emilee Seabass, MPH; and Eke Strand.
- 4. CONNECTION & CONVERSATION**: Current Events + DEI. Features a graphic with a woman's face and the text "HATE VIRUS".
- 5. March Madness Cornhole Tournament**: A group of people playing cornhole.
- 6. Pride Bingo 2021**: A graphic for the event.
- 7. Summer Photo Contest**: A photo of a person kayaking in a river.
- 8. OVERDOSE DEATH IS PREVENTABLE.**: A graphic with red poppies and the date 31 AUGUST.
- 9. Imperial Office Access**: A graphic of a hand waving to an "OPEN" sign.
- 10. LEARN MORE ABOUT BLACK HISTORY IN DURHAM**: HAYTI NEIGHBORHOOD WALKING HISTORY TOUR. Includes text: "We are excited to announce that DEI sub-committee #1 has organized two tours through Hayti Heritage Center to learn more about Black history in Durham. These tours will be followed by lunch gathering at a restaurant nearby to reflect on the learnings from the tour."
- 11. CONNECTION & CONVERSATION**: Mental Health. Features a graphic of a human head profile.
- 12. DPHS Staff Hiring Toolkit**: A flowchart showing the hiring process from Preparation to Offer.
- 13. DEI Evaluation Metrics**: A graphic of a clipboard with a bar chart.
- 14. Department of Population Health Sciences**: Mixed Methods Analysis of Inclusive Pedagogy in a First Year Population Health Sciences Curriculum. Committee: Tomi Akinyemiju, PhD (Chair), Amy Anderson, PhD, Heather King, PhD, Kathryn Pollak, PhD.
- 15. Department of Population Health Sciences**: DEI Foundational Training Course. Completion as of November 3, 2022. Includes a bar chart showing completion rates for various groups.

HOLIDAY CALENDAR & HERITAGE MONTHS BY SERAMOUNT

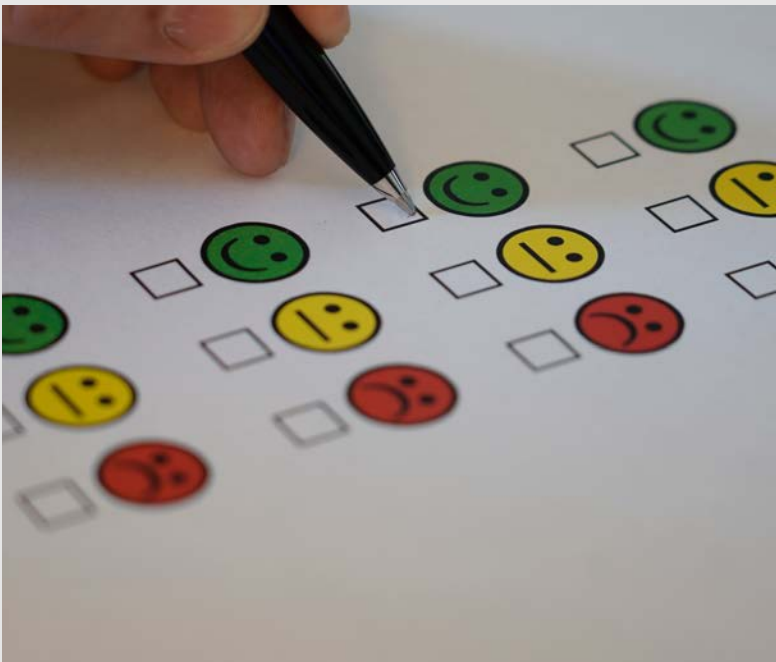
is an excellent resource for holidays and cultural events, updated regularly.

The world is rich with diversity, which is reflected in the observances celebrated by its various cultures and populations. Knowledge of the diversity holidays and celebrations in this calendar can enhance our workplace diversity and inclusion efforts.

Please download the 2023 calendar [here](#)



Want to be featured in the next newsletter or have valuable feedback to share?



PLEASE FILL OUT OUR SHORT SURVEY AND TELL US WHAT YOU THINK OF THE NEWSLETTERS.

WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK AND WILL USE IT IMPROVE THE CONTENTS OF FUTURE NEWSLETTERS.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO PROVIDE YOUR FEEDBACK.

REFERENCES

- Cover page image - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z6vh8xs>
- Keep Durham Beautiful events - <https://keepdurhambeautiful.org/events/2023-mlk-day-of-service>
- Tu B' shevat celebrations - <https://jewishunpacked.com/how-to-celebrate-tu-bishvat/>
- Ostara celebrations - <https://www.mabonhouse.co/ostara>
- Holi celebrations - <https://time.com/5799354/what-is-holi/>
- Friends of Geer cemetery - <https://friendsofgeercemetery.org/index.php/events/clean-up-april22/>
- Seramount holiday calendar - <https://seramount.com/articles/category/heritage-months/>

The DEI Newsletter is created by
SubCommittee #1 Ashwini Joshi and Heidi McCann.

The template was retrieved from Canva.com