

VOLUME 6
WINTER 2023

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION NEWSLETTER





From the Team

Welcome to the sixth volume of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) newsletter. As we embark on another chapter of our DEI journey, we reaffirm our dedication to cultivating an inclusive environment where every voice is not only heard but celebrated. In this edition, we continue to champion the values that define us, aspiring to create a space where all individuals feel empowered to share their unique experiences and ideas.

Join the team!

*Email us for details at
DiversityTeam@phsscommunity.com*

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DEI WINTER CALENDAR

December

- ADVENT (3-24)**
- HANUKKAH (8-15)**
- KWANZAA (26-JAN 1)**
- DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (3)**
- PANSEXUAL PRIDE (8)**
- HUMAN RIGHTS DAY (10)**
- INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY (18)**
- WINTER SOLSTICE (21)**
- CHRISTMAS EVE (24)**
- CHRISTMAS DAY (25)**
- BOXING DAY (26)**

January

- NEW YEAR'S DAY (1)**
- WORLD BRAILLE DAY (4)**
- RIBBON SKIRT DAY (4)**
- EPIPHANY (6)**
- LOHRI (13)**
- ORTHODOX NEW YEAR (14)**
- PONGAL (15-18)**
- THAIPUSAM (25)**
- HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY (27)**
- REMEMBRANCE OF QUEBEC MOSQUE ATTACK AND ACTION AGAINST ISLAMAPHOBIA (29)**

February

- WORLD HIJAB DAY (1)**
- IMBOLC (1)**
- WHITE CANE WEEK (4-10)**
- LAILAT AL MIRAJ (6-7)**
- LUNAR NEW YEAR (9-10)**
- LOSAR (10)**
- SHROVE TUESDAY (13)**
- VASANT PANCHAMI (14)**
- ASH WEDNESDAY (14)**
- LENT (14-MAR 30)**
- LANTERN FESTIVAL (24)**
- PINK SHIRT DAY (28)**

full Version



The CCDI Diversity and Inclusion Calendar is a comprehensive resource designed to help team members stay informed about important dates. It includes religious and spiritual observances, cultural celebrations, and awareness days, all conveniently compiled in one place. Being mindful of these dates and planning activities around them will enable you to foster inclusivity within your community every day of the year.



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HUMAN RIGHTS

Month



The Declaration

10 December 2023 marks the 75th anniversary of one of the world's most groundbreaking global pledges: the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR). This landmark document enshrines the inalienable rights that everyone is entitled to as a human being – regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

The Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 and sets out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected. Available in more than 500 languages, it is the [most translated document](#) in the world.

2023

The theme for 2023 is Freedom, Equality and Justice for All. In the decades since the adoption of the UDHR in 1948, human rights have become more recognized and more guaranteed across the globe.

Nevertheless, the commitment to uphold dignity and equality in rights as outlined in the UDHR has faced ongoing challenges in recent years. Pandemics, conflicts, exploding inequalities, morally bankrupt global financial system, racism, climate change – the values, and rights enshrined in the UDHR provide guideposts for our collective actions that do not leave anyone behind.




“

The Universal Declaration shows the way to common values and approaches that can help resolve tensions and create the security and stability our world craves.

”

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL
ANTÓNIO GUTERRES


*Learn how you
can take part!*



Respectful Communication

Avoid assumptions

When thinking about issues of diversity and interacting with colleagues, always check yourself by asking: Am I missing any part of the picture? What do I think I know, and what do I actually know? Challenge those assumptions!

Avoid spokesperson syndrome

Use “I” language. Ensure that individuals speak from their own experience and not as the representative of an entire group. Be careful that you don’t become a spokesperson yourself.

Address behaviour, not belief

All individuals are free to believe whatever it is that they believe. However, all employees must behave respectfully toward one another in the workplace.

Be curious and ask respectfully

Put your natural curiosity to good use. Often our fear of inadvertently offending someone can become a barrier to asking the necessary questions. You might say something like, “If you have a few minutes today, I’d love to learn more about your thoughts on _____.” This kind of language communicates that you respect your colleagues and are open to understanding a new perspective.

Debunk stereotypes

Stereotypes can be the worst culprit in creating conflicts and misunderstandings. Watch out for keywords such as “all,” “always,” “never,” “them,” and “those people.”

Platinum rule

Treat others the way they would like to be treated. The only way to know what respect “looks” like to someone is to ask.

Acknowledge and apologize for mistakes

Given the breadth and depth of diversity, we’re all going to make mistakes. But mistakes are important to make—you can learn from them, and they provide an opportunity to deepen our understanding of one another—so long as they are dealt with appropriately. By first acknowledging the mistake, taking ownership and genuinely apologizing for the mistake made, you can foster positive growth and community.



Listen actively

If you are mentally constructing what you are going to say next while a colleague is still speaking, that signifies you have stopped listening actively.

"Unity in diversity is the strength of a thriving society. Embracing religious inclusion not only honors individual beliefs but also fosters a collective spirit where the richness of diverse faiths becomes a source of inspiration, understanding, and shared values."

Dr. Hans Küng



RELIGIOUS INCLUSION

In the context of the Harvard Business Review article, "Creating Space for Religious Diversity at Work," the acknowledgment that over 80% of individuals worldwide identify with some form of religious affiliation underscores the importance for organizations to comprehensively understand and integrate religious diversity into the workplace.

The recognition of this global tapestry of beliefs presents an opportunity for workplaces to embrace a wealth of perspectives, experiences, and cultural insights, enriching the overall organizational dynamic. However, it also accentuates the need for proactive measures to mitigate potential tensions and misunderstandings that may arise.

To navigate this intricate landscape, employers stand to benefit from a nuanced understanding of the diverse perspectives and experiences associated with different religions. Beyond mere acknowledgment, this understanding empowers organizations to create an environment that not only accommodates but actively celebrates religious diversity.

By fostering a workplace that values differences and encourages open dialogue, organizations can harness the positive aspects of religious diversity while cultivating an inclusive atmosphere. In doing so, they contribute not only to the well-being of their employees but also to the overall success and cohesion of the organization on a global scale.

How to Talk About Religion at Work

Religious diversity in the workplace is a valuable asset that contributes to a rich and inclusive organizational culture. However, discussing religion can be a sensitive matter, and it's essential to approach such conversations with respect and understanding. This guide aims to provide helpful tips on how to talk about religion at work, fostering an environment of inclusivity and open dialogue.

Understand and Respect Differences

Begin by acknowledging that individuals may hold different religious beliefs or none at all. Foster a culture of respect by appreciating the diversity of perspectives within the organization.

Voluntary Disclosure

Remember that discussions about religion should be voluntary. Avoid pressuring individuals to disclose their beliefs and ensure that employees feel comfortable maintaining their privacy regarding their faith.

Educate Yourself

Take the initiative to learn about different religions, customs, and holidays. This knowledge will help you approach conversations with sensitivity and avoid unintentional misunderstandings.

Promote Inclusive Language

Use inclusive language that respects different faiths and beliefs. Avoid assumptions, stereotypes, or generalizations about any religious group.

Be Mindful of Proselytizing

Encourage open dialogue but set clear boundaries regarding proselytizing or imposing religious views on others. Ensure that conversations are inclusive and not coercive.



Addressing Religious Holidays

Acknowledge and respect religious holidays, but be mindful of not assuming everyone observes the same holidays. Check out our diverse holiday calendar that includes major observances from various religions and communities.



FEBRUARY 10

LUNAR NEW YEAR

We caught up with PHSS' Payroll and Benefits Coordinator, Shan Yi, to talk about her traditions for the Lunar New Year!



My experience only represents a very small fraction of all traditions. People in different regions may celebrate differently.



The first thing we do on the morning of New Year's day is go around to greet everyone in the neighborhood! We would knock on everyone's door, say "happy New Year!", take some snacks (usually candies, sunflower seeds, or mandarins), and move on to the next until we have covered the whole neighborhood. Usually after 10am everything settles down; then we get ready to visit relatives! Lots of social time!

One tradition that we hold is to wear new clothes on New Year's Day. Absolutely not before, must not ruin the fun of New Year's Day! This tradition is rooted in the belief that putting on fresh attire symbolizes a fresh start and wards off evil spirits, promoting good luck and prosperity for the coming year.

It is a cultural practice deeply tied to the symbolic significance of renewal and positive beginnings. We usually buy a new outfit beforehand, try them on, fold them up again, and carefully put them back in the original package. Then finally, on the morning of New Year's Day, we can put on our new clothes! It was a fun memory, especially as a child.





DECOR

Posting couplets is a fun tradition! They are posted on the sides and top of the door leading to our homes. Couplets are a pair of consecutive lines of poetry, commonly used in traditional Chinese literature and especially during the celebration of the Lunar New Year. They are a prominent feature of Chinese couplet writing, known as "duilian," and are frequently displayed on doorways and walls during festive occasions. Poetry is beautiful in the Chinese language! I love it with great passion!

FESTIVE FOODS

Traditionally, in our family, New Year's Day is when we get to eat lots of deep-fried food! The best! The most popular one is deep-fried pork strips. They are small strips, about 2 inches long, very thin, lightly breaded, seasoned with ground Sichuan pepper,

and a small amount of soy sauce. It is very crunchy! Some bigger families would make a huge amount, nearly a dozen pounds; they put them on a huge bamboo tray and store them on the balcony. Balconies have windows and no heat, so it is a natural fridge. Stocking up on food is important because most businesses won't open until the 15th.

FIRECRACKERS

Firecrackers at midnight make a fun start to the new year! We believe it brings a good, happy new year, like what firecrackers sound like: loud and happy! After dinner with family, my cousins would go out to find open land; we would bring a few boxes of different kinds of firecrackers and fireworks. It was lots of fun! But for safety reasons, it's been banned in populated areas in recent years.



Sufganiyot

A cross between a beignet and a jelly donut, sufganiyot are pillowy donuts that are eaten in Israel and around the world during Hanukkah.

Ingredients

warm water	1 cup
active dry yeast	1 tbsp
all-purpose flour	3 cups
confectioners sugar	1/4 cup
salt	3/4 tsp
ground nutmeg	1/2 tsp
large egg yolks	2
vegetable oil	2 tbsp + 2 quarts for frying
vanilla extract	1 tsp
jam or filling of choice	1 cup

During this time, foods fried in oil symbolize the miracle of oil that burned for eight days instead of one in the Hanukkah story.

Sufganiyot are traditionally filled with jelly or jam, but if your crew doesn't care for jelly in their donuts, the filling options are limitless: custard, Nutella, pudding, pumpkin butter, apple butter, or dulce de leche are all great options. Sufganiyot are also delicious plain.



[Open Full Recipe](#)



HOW TO MAKE IT



1

- Combine **warm water** and **yeast** in a small bowl and let sit until foamy, about 5 minutes.
- Add the **egg yolks**, 2 tablespoons of **oil**, and **vanilla** to the water/yeast mixture and whisk with a fork until combined.
- Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine the **flour**, **confectioners' sugar**, **salt**, and **nutmeg**. Whisk to combine.



2

- **Add** the liquid mixture to the flour mixture. Stir with rubber spatula until the dough comes together. It should be a bit sticky.
- **Cover** the bowl with plastic wrap. Let the dough rise on the countertop until doubled in size, 1 to 2 hours.
- **Line** a baking sheet with paper towels. Line another baking sheet with parchment paper and dust with flour. Generously dust a clean countertop and your hands with flour. Scrape the dough out of the bowl onto the counter and dust the dough with flour.



3

- **Pat** the dough into 1/4-in-thick rectangle. It should be about 10 to 12 inches in size.
- Using a pizza wheel or very sharp knife, **cut** the dough into 24 two-inch squares.
- Add enough **oil** to a large Dutch oven or heavy pot to measure about 2 inches deep and heat over medium heat to 350°F.



4

- Using a slotted spoon, **transfer** the donuts to the paper towel-lined baking sheet.
- Use a paring knife to **puncture** the side of each to form a pocket in the center.
- Place the tip of a squeeze bottle or piping bag into the pocket and **squeeze** 1 to 2 teaspoons of jam or jelly inside.
- Using a fine sieve, **dust** the donuts generously with confectioners' sugar. **Serve** warm.



5



6



7



8



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As an Employer Partner with the Canadian Centre for Diversity & Inclusion (CCDI), PHSS is able to provide a number of resources for staff to support us on our diversity and inclusion journey! If you haven't already; be sure to self-register today by scanning the QR code!

(Be sure to use your PHSS staff email address when signing up!)



CCDI Registration

www.phsscommunity.com