

Albany Damien Center

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Committee Newsletter



Fall 2024



Welcome to October and Global Diversity Awareness Month! Diversity is a large part of what makes life interesting, and we're excited to spend this time celebrating all the ways our different ethnicities, cultures, heritages, experiences, abilities, and other attributes contribute to more dynamic and innovative workplace.

Global Diversity Awareness Month draws attention to the great diversity of human identities, perspectives, and experiences that surround us every day. At an organizational level, highlighting diversity encourages us to celebrate the strength in our differences and to look outside our own perspective to see the world differently.

Did you know?

Diversity brings us many things – such as...

Expanding Knowledge: Research shows that we learn more from people who are different from us than from those who are similar. Interacting with individuals from diverse backgrounds widens our thought processes and broadens our horizons.

Experiencing New Cultures: World travel has been known to have a transformative effect on people, but you don't need to hop on a plane to experience the richness of other cultures. Taking the time to understand and appreciate another culture's traditions, history, and heritage can be an enlightening and enriching experience.

Unique Strength: Our differences are what make us unique. When people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and identities come together, they can create a vibrant community. Exposure to new cultures and ideas benefits us all, fostering a more inclusive and innovative environment.



A note from...

Lorenzo Rodriguez, ETE Program Coordinator

What does DEI mean to you?

"DEI serves as a vital framework for fostering comfort, belonging, and inclusivity among all our members and staff, cultivating a culture that truly welcomes diversity. However, equity becomes attainable only when we actively invite and hire individuals not despite their diverse backgrounds, but because of them. Lived experiences are invaluable expertise, and it is this rich perspective that will guide us toward achieving true equity."

DEI Activity: Test Your Knowledge of other cultures!

1. Three-finger and raised-arm salutes are illegal in Thailand. True or False
2. It is offensive to show your foot or shoe or use the feet to point at objects in India. True or False
3. In some Asian and Islamic cultures, the gesture of 'thumbs up' is a major insult. True or False
4. What holiday do Canadians celebrate on the second Monday in October?
 - a. Christmas
 - b. Mother's Day
 - c. Canadian Founder's Day
 - d. Thanksgiving
5. How many Gods are there in the Hindu faith?
 - a. 25
 - b. 750
 - c. 1555
 - d. 33 Million
6. What country has the largest population in the world?
 - a. China
 - b. India
 - c. Russia
 - d. Brazil
7. What one thing has the power to bring culturally different people together?
 - a. A vigorous debate
 - b. Silence
 - c. Food
 - d. A heated argument



Diversity Calendar:

October – National Disability Awareness Month & Global Diversity Awareness Month

- 10/9 Indigenous Peoples' Day
- 10/10 World Mental Health Day
- 10/17 LGBTQ Spirit Day

November – National Native American Heritage Month

- 11/16 International Day for Tolerance
- 11/20 Transgender Day of Remembrance

December

- 12/1 World AIDS Day
- 12/3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- 12/10 International Human Rights Day
- 12/16-12/24 Las Posadas
- 12/7-12/15 – Hanukkah
- 12/25 Christmas
- 12/26-1/1 Kwanzaa



Your DEI Committee:

Name	Department/Title
Jay Fields	Employment Advocate
Avery Crawford	Accounting Associate
Ryan Ramdass	LGBT Health Navigator
Shameeka Lewis	Community Health Worker
Chris Tarnowski	Assoc. Exec Director, Operations
Marz Albarran	Board Member



DEI Committee Mission:

To improve diversity, inclusion, equality and understanding by promoting dialogue, providing information, and fostering respect for all staff, tenants, and members.

Purpose:

To explore, educate, and guide the organization to be a more inclusive, equitable, culturally competent, and supportive environment for all.



How can you get involved?

Join us on October 25th from 1-3pm for Diversity in Art! Explore what diversity means to you through art. All supplies included. The fun starts at 1pm in the Living Room.

Interested in DEI? Have ideas? Want to learn more? Let us know! Reach out to any DEI Committee Member or watch for future newsletters that will contain information & opportunities on DEI projects.

Answers to DEI Activity: 1. True, 2. True, 3. True, 4. D, 5. D, 6. A, 7. C