School of Planning, Design and Construction
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

School of Planning, Design and Construction DEI Efforts Report

The intention of this report is to highlight efforts to advance the School of Planning, Design and Construction (SPDC) DEI Strategic Plan during the 2023-24 academic year. The SPDC DEI Strategic Plan can be located here. In this report, progress toward goals is listed below the individual strategy actions. Actions that were not undertaken during this timeframe are highlighted in gray to reference for future years' activities.

General

In general, the SPDC DEI committee achieved the following:

- The DEI committee met regularly during 2023-24, once per month during the academic year. Trish Machemer served in the role of committee chair.
- We were pleased to welcome four new members to the committee this year: Jordan Kenyon (Graduate Program Coordinator), Sai Srijith Lingannapeta (Construction Management master's student), Marcus Martin (Academic Advisor), and Juan Martinez (Construction Management junior).
- In May 2024, we met with Antomia (Mia) Farrell, the new Director of the CANR Office of DEI to discuss ways that the college can help us to optimize our DEI efforts.
- SPDC received the Platinum Award for 2023-24 from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources for its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts. We proudly display this badge on the front page of our website.

Goal 1: Inclusive Culture and Climate

1. Conduct annual climate surveys related to DEI and exit interviews with faculty, staff and students. Data generated should be tracked to understand changes in the experience of faculty, staff, and students. Results should be shared with SPDC stakeholders (Timeline: ongoing)

    - In April/May 2024, the DEI committee conducted a survey to assess formal and informal dimensions of DEI issues within the School and to measure progress toward our goals as outlined in the strategic plan. The survey was distributed to all SPDC faculty, academic staff, support staff, and students. The results comparing responses from 2024 to responses from 2022 are included in Appendix A.

- Some notable changes in this comparison include:
    - A higher percentage of faculty agreed with the statement: “Administrative and leadership structures and processes in SPDC are inclusive, respectful, and supportive” (from 46.7% to 71.4%).
    - 100% of support staff agreed that “SPDC has a strong mentoring system that is effective in supporting all staff members from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds in the career advancement process, as well as in expanding their professional growth” (from 0% to 100%).
    - There was a small increase in the percentage of students who agreed with this statement: “I am satisfied with the overall SPDC environment that I have experienced within the past 12 months” (from 72.1% to 76%). However, agreement declined for almost every other statement related to DEI, which represents opportunities for improvement.

2. Identify virtual and physical spaces that are inaccessible or may not be inclusive (e.g., Human Ecology 4th floor, bathrooms, web resources). Examine the degree of accessibility/inclusivity and identify potential solutions (Timeline: ongoing)
    - The DEI committee polled SPDC students about virtual and physical spaces that are inaccessible/exclusive in our School. We intend to work with Infrastructure, Planning and Facilities to identify ways to address these concerns.
3. Facilitate school-wide and cross-program, non-DEI social events (e.g., coffee hour, potluck, tailgate, etc.). Make events manageable (not a lot of extra work) and communicate widely. These events should offer opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to actively engage in conversations across differences and allow individuals to apply their learnings around DEI in authentic and meaningful ways (Timeline: short)
    - We hosted events to highlight our diversity (including a Lunar New Year festival (Spring 2023), winter holidays celebration (Fall 2023), and Sankranti festival (Spring 2024).
4. Facilitate school-wide and cross-program, non-DEI professional events (e.g., school awards banquet, open house, etc.). Make events manageable (not a lot of extra work) and communicate widely. These events should offer opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to actively engage in conversations across differences and allow individuals to apply their learnings around DEI in authentic and meaningful ways (Timeline: ongoing)
    - The School hosted its second annual SPDC Recognition ceremony in April 2024. The event provided an opportunity to celebrate student scholarship winners, faculty and staff awardees, and a new photo and sketch contest to showcase the talents of our students.
5. Display a list of cultural and religious holidays and observances in a prominent place on the SPDC website and distribute this list to faculty and staff annually (Timeline: short)

- Each month a new graphic showing a diverse group of observances is provided on social media and our website: https://www.canr.msu.edu/spdc/about_us/diversity-equity-inclusion/. See these graphics in Appendix B.

6. Showcase and/or celebrate our diversity through our website, social media, and other internal and external-facing communications (e.g., heritage months, teaching awards, service awards, etc.). (Timeline: ongoing)

7. Develop methods for engaging students in efficient and effective ways to share information and gather their feedback (e.g., Miro board, hallway monitors, email, social media, DEI slide deck that instructors can provide in D2L, etc.). (Timeline: short)

8. Host workshops and training on topics such as restorative justice, conflict resolution, cultural competence, anti-racism, gender equity, and other DEI-related professional development opportunities (Timeline: ongoing)

    - SPDC Interim Director, Rene Hinojosa, invited Dr. Jabbar Bennett to give a presentation on MSU's DEI Strategic Plan at the annual SPDC retreat (August 23).

9. Identify and incorporate contributions toward advancing DEI, along with other institutional values, as required components of New Employee Orientation and student orientations. (Timeline: medium)

    - MSU now provides a university-wide mandated online introductory education program called "DEI Foundations." All Spartans, including students, staff and faculty, are required to take the course during their time at MSU.

10. Allocate or acquire funding from Program, School, College, and University, and external sources to support DEI initiatives (Timeline: ongoing)

    - Laura Winter applied for a CANR microgrant to try to increase inclusivity in IDES 150 through funding to create a material bank for students that have lower socioeconomic means (pending).

Goal 2: Curriculum and Instruction

1. Arrange and host regular workshops, as needed, to train faculty in how to embed DEI topics within the curriculum, how to facilitate difficult conversations in the classroom, or best practices for inclusive and equitable teaching (Timeline: short)

    - Laura Winter attended two trainings provided by Sherwin Williams to learn about incorporating diversity in her Interior Design classes (Fall 2023):
        - "Color & Paint in Environments for the Aging"
        - "How Do Cultures Influence Color?"

2. Establish learning cohorts of teaching faculty to support knowledge and skill development regarding incorporating DEI in the classroom (Timeline: medium)

3. Revise appropriate curricula to ensure that, to the extent possible, courses instill the value of DEI, promote cultural competence, address the needs of diverse populations, and reflect the experiences and voices of diverse populations (Timeline: medium)

4. Support and expand experiential learning and community-engaged learning opportunities with a focus on DEI issues or in diverse communities and with diverse stakeholders (Timeline: long)
    - Interior Design Senior Thesis Project (IDES 442 and IDES 452 Fall 2023/Spring2024) partners with Ingham County Land Bank to work on sites in Lansing to create designs that will support the community of Lansing. The location this year is a mixed-use site, so all have a residential component. For the commercial portion, proposed projects that they are working on are community centers with gardens, grocery stores (the site is in an area where fresh produce is not sold in the near vicinity) and childcare facilities.

Goal 3: Communication, Outreach, and External Engagement

1. Connect with and encourage participation in existing regular workshops to support incorporating DEI into community-engaged learning activities (Timeline: short)

2. Provide resources and/or DEI training for faculty, staff, and students prior to participating in activities with diverse communities (Timeline: medium)

    - The National Charrette Institute hosted a "Dream, Play, Build" lecture and workshop on April 10, 2024. James Rojas and John Kamp shared their inclusive, creative, hands-on community engagement technique called "Place It!" This approach has applications in urban planning and design projects; participants will use the technique to explore a vision for MSU campus neighborhoods.

3. Incorporate DEI values in memorandums of understanding with community partners (Timeline: long)

4. Document the current membership of our alumni and stakeholder advisory groups, our outreach and engagement efforts with diverse and historically underrepresented populations, and the diversity of our vendors and suppliers (Timeline: short).

5. Improve diversity of advisory board membership to obtain diverse perspectives from alumni or stakeholder advisory groups (Timeline: ongoing)

6. Increase and improve outreach and engagement activities with diverse and historically underrepresented students, staff, and faculty, as well as with diverse communities served (Timeline: medium)

    - Laura Winter was invited to be a panelist at the Common Ground – DEI Panel Discussion Event - Session-II Academia – DEI Collaboration initiatives of Universities, Students & Alumni, Lawrence Tech University, Southfield, MI. The event took place on

October 26th, 2023.

- Laura Winter participated in a webinar for Intercultural Awareness Day, "The Journey: Lessons from a Migrant Worker," with Dr. Felipe Lopez Sustaita, and a webinar "Building Relationships in Community Engagement Through Invitations," with Kiesha Warren-Gordon (Spring 2023).

7. Increase and promote relationships with diverse and underrepresented vendors and suppliers (Timeline: long)

8. Review stakeholder groups or populations to assess whether they represent a diverse set of backgrounds and experiences (Timeline: medium)

9. Develop and employ an evaluation tool to assess external partners' perceptions of SPDC stakeholders' cultural competence (Timeline: long)

Goal 4: Student Recruitment, Admission, Retention, and Completion

1. Identify underrepresented student populations at the school and program levels, as appropriate, to facilitate tracking of diversity and equity outcomes, recognizing that our definitions may be limited by the availability of data. Definitions may change over time (Timeline: short)

2. Establish a system for collecting/tracking and analyzing administrative data on students and document data collection process to ensure continuity and consistency of data collection over time (Timeline: medium)

3. Establish program-specific recruitment and admission goals, with particular attention paid toward addressing the needs of historically underrepresented students (Timeline: medium)

4. Access existing scholarships and identify other funding mechanisms to further diversify the student population (Timeline: medium)

    - We would like to note three student DEI awards: 1) Naomi Bailey (Landscape Architecture) received the 2023 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion scholarship from the Michigan Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects; Ava Yon (Landscape Architecture) received the 2024 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion scholarship from the Michigan Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects; and 3) Jakobi Johnson (Landscape Architecture) received the 2023 Landscape Forms DEI Scholarship from the Landscape Architecture Foundation.
    - Khayci Bryant (Urban & Regional Planning master's student) was selected for an Academic Achievement Graduate Assistantship (AAGA) award for the 2023-24 academic year.

5. Establish and build upon existing relationships and recruitment pathways in partnership with Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) and diverse institutions and communities from local through global scales (Timeline: long)

6. Regularly collect and analyze data on program access and achievement/opportunity gaps (secondary admission, graduation rates, time to degree, grading practices) to monitor and close those gaps, particularly among historically underrepresented student populations (Timeline: medium)

7. Connect to and publicize existing university resources and opportunities to support student success, especially students from historically underrepresented backgrounds (Timeline: ongoing)

    - We repost DEI and other MSU opportunities for students through our social media platforms, like Instagram, and our student newsletter.

Goal 5: Faculty and Staff Recruitment, Retention, Promotion, and Advancement

1. Identify underrepresented faculty and staff populations, at the school and program levels, as appropriate, to facilitate tracking of diversity and equity outcomes, recognizing that our definitions may be limited by the availability of data. Definitions may change over time (Timeline: short).

2. Establish a system for collecting/tracking and analyzing administrative data on faculty/staff and document data collection process to ensure continuity and consistency of data collection over time (Timeline: medium).

3. Create and adopt faculty and staff diversity hiring toolkits and ensure that search committees actively engage with best practices (Timeline: short).

    - Mary Beth Graebert attended trainings on the Supervisor's Role in Supporting DEI in the Workplace (January 9, 2024) and Supporting Accessibility and Neurodivergence in the Workplace (February 6, 2024).

4. Explore cluster hires, DEI-centered positions, strong succession plans and pathway programs. Create professorships that focus on DEI (Timeline: ongoing).

    - SPDC obtained an 1855 professorship from the Provost's office; during the 2023-24 academic year, we conducted a search for this individual. Dr. Jesus Lara will join the URP/LA faculty in Fall 2024. His research will address environmental and social justice. Hispanic faculty, like Dr. Lara, are underrepresented in SPDC.

5. Regularly collect and analyze data on retention, promotion, and advancement of historically underrepresented faculty and staff (Timeline: ongoing)

6. Identify or develop resources to support targeted mentoring and professional

development opportunities for historically underrepresented faculty and staff (Timeline: medium).

7. Develop and implement process for acknowledging contributions toward advancing DEI in the reappointment, promotion, and tenure (RPT) process and in annual performance evaluations for faculty, academic staff, and support staff (Timeline: medium).

    - We submitted a nomination for Noah Durst to the CANR "You Belong Here" champion award. Noah co-chaired the SPDC DEI committee for three years. In addition, he employs best practices for inclusive and engaged teaching and conducts research on issues of inequity in the built environment.
    - We submitted a nomination for Laura Winter to the "You Belong Here" champion award. Laura has served on the SPDC DEI committee since January 2021, and it always the first one to volunteer for planning cultural events, gathering information, and securing DEI speakers. She brings diversity and inclusion into her classroom and collaborations with community partners.

8. Address inequities in the teaching evaluation process (SIRS). (Timeline: ongoing)
    - The university has adopted a new teaching evaluation tool: the Student Perceptions of Learning Survey (SPLS). The new system is intended to provide instructors with feedback on their instructional practices and to contribute to instructor retention, promotion, tenure and salary decisions. SPLS replaces the outdated SIRS system.

Goal 6: Research

1. Develop a mechanism for tracking DEI-relevant proposals, community-engaged scholarship, and research led by historically underrepresented scholars or including underrepresented students and recommend this step to colleges and the university (Timeline: short).

2. Increase the number of proposals for internal and external funding opportunities relevant to DEI in the built environment, community-engaged scholarship in diverse communities, or research led by historically underrepresented scholars (Timeline: medium).

    - As an example of SPDC faculty receiving grants with DEI aspects, Drs. Durst and Nevarez Martinez received a National Science Foundation grant to examine housing inequality.
    - Dr. Nubani and a team of MSU researchers received a DOJ grant to work with the City of Detroit Police Department on a project to enhance community safety and reduce crime in Detroit's 10th Precinct.

3. Increase the allocation of School and Program funding to research that achieves DEI objectives (Timeline: medium).

4. Showcase research by faculty and students that focuses on DEI in the built environment in marketing, social media, and other outreach materials (Timeline: short).

    - We use our social media platforms to showcase research by faculty and students that focuses on DEI in the built environment; connect to and publicize existing university resources and opportunities to support student success, especially students from historically underrepresented backgrounds; and highlight achievements of our students, faculty and staff, particularly related to accomplishments in DEI, including awards.

5. Prioritize research on DEI in the built environment when hiring new faculty members (Timeline: ongoing).

6. Host regular lectures and panels by guests, faculty and students focused on issues of DEI in the built environment, at least once per semester (Timeline: ongoing).

Goal 7: Leadership and School Structure

1. Identify areas of conflict regarding School and Program decision-making processes and/or authority (Timeline: short).

2. Develop written policy, including additions to the School bylaws, where possible to address these conflicts (Timeline: ongoing).

    - SPDC administration has been developing a "One-Stop Shop" of resources for SPDC faculty and staff, including School policies, operational procedures, bylaws, and School meeting minutes. This action helps to create transparency and strives toward one of our DEI Strategic Plan goals: "Ensure that SPDC leadership and decision-making structures provide inclusive and equitable access to information, processes, and policies, as well as opportunities for stakeholders to voice opinions and concerns."

3. Hold discussions with faculty and staff about who should conduct this outreach and research (e.g., DEI, SAC, ad hoc committee). (Timeline: short)

4. Conduct further analysis to understand and address potential inequities or perceived inequities regarding reward, recognition, and compensation of faculty and staff (Timeline: medium).

5. Conduct further analysis to understand what factors impede or reduce trust or accountability, including through climate surveys and exit interviews or external review by third-party individuals (Timeline: medium).

6. Establish designated processes or people to report and address internal grievances, including those unrelated to DEI issues, DEI-related concerns or grievances, and

discrimination or harassment (Timeline: medium).

7. Increase awareness of who, where, and how students, staff, and faculty should report incidents, including those involving discrimination and harassment, and what the procedures are for addressing such incidents (Timeline: short).

8. Provide School and Program leaders with training and other resources to support DEI best practices within six months of hire, as well as ongoing training and resources (Timeline: medium).

9. Hire a faculty or staff member with expertise in and responsibility for DEI issues (Timeline: ongoing).

    - Mary Beth served on the search committee for the Associate Dean and Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in CANR (Fall 2023).
    - Dr. Noah Durst serves on the College of Social Science's (CSS) Dean's Advisory Committee for Diversity and Inclusion.

Appendix A: DEI Survey Response Comparisons (2022-2024)

Faculty

Question	2022	2024
SPDC has a strong mentoring system that is effective in supporting all faculty members from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds in the career advancement process, as well as in expanding their professional growth.	48.3%	46.7%
SPDC actively values and seeks to enroll students with diverse racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, immigrant, international, sexual orientation, ability/disability, and religious backgrounds.	62.1%	64.3%
SPDC curricular decisions, offerings, and delivery address DEI challenges and opportunities and are responsive to the needs of an increasingly diverse community, state, national, and global context.	41.4%	64.3%
SPDC outreach and engagement efforts engage diverse communities and stakeholders and employ DEI best practices.	N/A	64.3%
Internal and external communication within the SPDC community highlights diverse voices and operationalizes the values of equity and inclusion.	60%	71.4%
Administrative and leadership structures and processes in SPDC are inclusive, respectful, and supportive.	46.7%	71.4%
The School Director helps set the tone for creating an engaging and inclusive environment for all groups.	56.7% (“School and Program Directors…”)	50%
Program Directors help set the tone for creating an engaging and inclusive environment for all groups.	56.7% (“School and Program Directors…”)	57.1%
I am satisfied with the overall SPDC environment that I have experienced within the past 12 months.	46.7%	71.4%

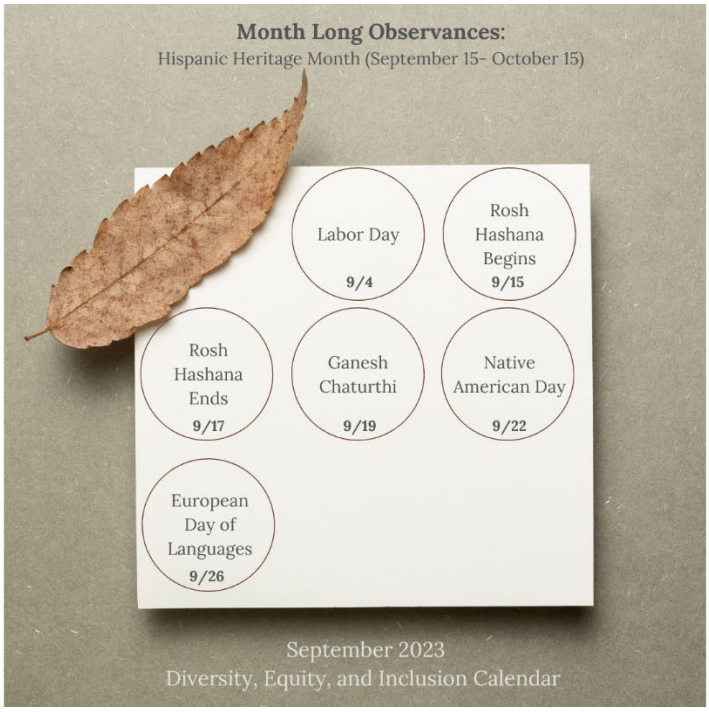
Staff

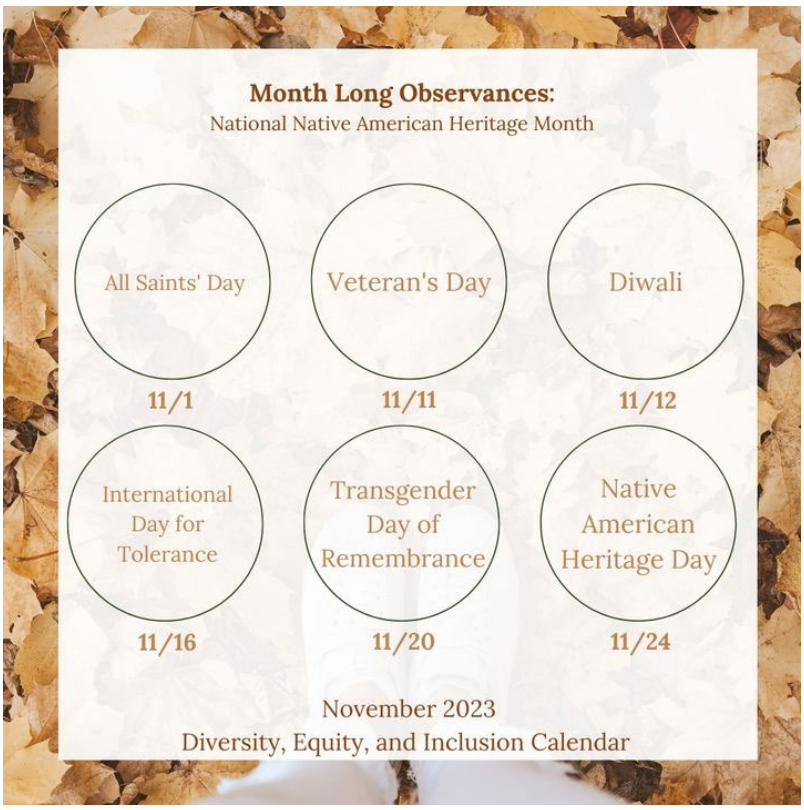
Question	2022	2024
SPDC has a strong mentoring system that is effective in supporting all staff members from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds in the career advancement process, as well as in expanding their professional growth.	0%	100%
SPDC outreach and engagement efforts engage diverse communities and stakeholders and employ DEI best practices.	N/A	66.7%
Internal and external communication within the SPDC community highlights diverse voices and operationalizes the values of equity and inclusion.	33.3%	66.7%
I am satisfied with the overall SPDC environment that I have experienced within the past 12 months.	0%	66.7%

Students

Question	2022	2024
I am satisfied with the overall SPDC environment that I have experienced within the past 12 months.	72.1%	76%
Administrative and leadership structures and processes in SPDC are inclusive, respectful, and supportive.	83.9%	70.8%
The School Director helps set the tone for creating an engaging and inclusive environment for all groups.	83.9% ("School and Program Directors…")	54.2%
Program Directors help set the tone for creating an engaging and inclusive environment for all groups.	83.9% ("School and Program Directors…")	62.5%
SPDC outreach and engagement efforts engage diverse communities and stakeholders and employ DEI best practices.	N/A	56.5%
Internal and external communication within the SPDC community highlights diverse voices and operationalizes the values of equity and inclusion.	75.8%	63.6%
SPDC has a strong mentoring and advising system that is effective in supporting all students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds in the academic advancement process, as well as in expanding their professional growth.	67.2%	60.9%
SPDC actively values and seeks to enroll students with diverse racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, immigrant, international, sexual orientation, ability/disability, and religious backgrounds.	76.1%	43.5%
SPDC curricular decisions, offerings, and delivery address DEI challenges and opportunities and are responsive to the needs of an increasingly diverse community, state, national, and global context.	67.2%	52.2%

Appendix B: Monthly Cultural and Religious Observances




Month Long Observances:
National Native American Heritage Month
All Saints' Day
11/1
Veteran's Day
11/11
Diwali
11/12
International Day for Tolerance
11/16
Transgender Day of Remembrance
11/20
Native American Heritage Day
11/24
November 2023
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Calendar

Month Long Observances:
Global Diversity Awareness Month
LGBT History Month
National Disability Employment Awareness Month
World AIDS Day
12/1
International Day of Persons with Disabilities
12/3
Hanukkah Begins
12/7
Bodhi Day
12/8
International Human Rights Day
12/10
Hanukkah Ends
12/15
Las Posadas Begins
12/10
Winter Solstice/Yule
12/22
Las Posadas Ends
12/24
Christmas
12/25
Kwanzaa Begins
12/26
Kwanzaa Ends
1/1
December 2023
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Calendar

January 2024
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Calendar
New Year's Day 1/1
Dia De Los Reyes 1/6
Korean American Day 1/13
Sankranti 1/15
Martin Luther King Jr. Day 1/15
World Religion Day 1/21
Holocaust Rememberance Day 1/27
Month Long Observances:
Poverty in America Awareness Month
Human Trafficking Prevention Month
National Braille Literacy Month

FEBRUARY 2024
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Calendar
2/10 Lunar New Year
2/11 Int'l Day of Women & Girls in Sci.
2/13 Mardi Gras
2/14 Ash Wednesday
2/14 Valentine's Day
2/19 President's Day
2/20 World Day of Social Justice
Month Long Observances:
American Heart Month
Black History Month

March 2024
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Calendar
3/1 Employee Appreciation Day
3/8 International Women's Day
3/10 Ramadan Begins
3/17 St. Patrick's Day
3/21 World Down Syndrome Day
3/25 Holi
3/31 Transgender Day of Visibility
3/31 Easter
Month Long Observances:
National Women's History Month
Irish-American Heritage Month
Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

APRIL 2024
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Calendar
4/2 World Autism Awareness Day
4/9 Eid-al-Fitr (End of Ramadan)
4/12 National Day of Silence (LGBTQ+)
4/21 Start of Ridvan (Baha'i)
4/22 Earth Day
4/24 Administrative Professionals Day
4/28 World Day for Safety and Health at Work
4/22 - 4/30 Passover
Month Long Observanaces:
Arab-American Heritage Month
Autism Acceptance Month
National Deaf History Month

2024
MAY
5/5
Cinco de Mayo
5/12
Mother's Day
5/19
Malcolm X Day
5/17
Int. Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, & Biphobia
5/21
World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue & Development
5/27
Memorial Day
Haitian Heritage Month
Jewish-American Heritage Month
South Asian-American Heritage Monthy
Asian-American & South Pacific Islander Heritage Month

JUNE 2024
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Calendar
6/5
World Environment Day
6/9
Race Unity Day (Baha'i)
6/12
Loving Day
6/18
Autistic Pride Day
6/19
Juneteenth
6/20
World Refugee Day
6/26
Anniversary of Legalization of Same-Sex Marriage
6/28
Stonewall Rebellion
Month Long Observanaces:
LGBTQ+ Pride Month
Caribbean American Heritage Month