

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER BY THE DEI OFFICE

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Making Connections Through DEI Discourse

The Struggles of Migrant Communities in the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Space

Migrant communities often face a unique set of challenges that are compounded for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD). These difficulties span across various aspects of life, including access to essential services, social isolation, and significant barriers during the immigration process. For immigrants with I/DD and their families, navigating these complexities can be a daunting experience, leaving them marginalized and unsupported.

Social Isolation and Lack of Services

- Language Barriers:
 - One of the primary hurdles for migrants with I/DD is the language barrier. Many services and supports for people with I/DD are primarily offered in English, making it difficult for non-English-speaking migrants to access the help they need. This language gap can lead to miscommunication, misunderstanding of medical advice, and an inability to advocate effectively for oneself or one's family members.
- Cultural Differences:
 - Cultural attitudes towards disability can vary significantly. In some cultures, disabilities may carry a stigma, discouraging families from seeking help. This cultural disconnect can lead to further isolation and reluctance to engage with available services, even when they are accessible.



Barriers in the Immigration Process

- Limited Knowledge of Services:
 - Newly arrived migrants may not be aware of the services available to people with I/DD. Without knowledge of how to navigate the healthcare and social service systems, families often struggle to find the right support. Additionally, the complexity of these systems can be overwhelming, particularly when compounded with the stress of adjusting to a new country.
- Financial Barriers:
 - Many immigrant families face financial instability, which can be exacerbated by the additional costs associated with caring for a family member with I/DD. Limited financial resources can restrict access to necessary therapies, medications, and support services, further isolating these people.
- Stringent Immigration Policies:
 - The immigration process itself can be particularly harsh for families with members who have I/DD. Many countries, including the United States, have stringent immigration policies that can disqualify applicants based on the perceived burden on social services. This means that families with members who have I/DD often times are denied visas or residency, forcing them to remain in less supportive environments.
- Health-Based Exclusions:
 - Some immigration policies include health-based exclusions that can disqualify people with certain disabilities. For instance, under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) Section 212(a) (4), the U.S. government can deny entry to people likely to become a "public charge." This term encompasses those who might require extensive medical care or social services, a category that often includes people with I/DD.



- Fear of Deportation:
 - For undocumented migrants, seeking services for I/DD can be fraught with fear. There is a pervasive anxiety that accessing healthcare or social services might expose their immigration status, leading to potential deportation. This fear often results in families avoiding essential services altogether.
- Long Waiting Periods:
 - The lengthy and complicated immigration process can mean long waiting periods for families. During this time, access to necessary I/DD services remains limited or unavailable, exacerbating the challenges faced by people with disabilities.

The intersection of immigration status and intellectual and developmental disabilities presents a complex web of challenges for migrant communities. From social isolation and language barriers to stringent immigration policies and financial constraints, the obstacles are numerous and often insurmountable. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort to create more inclusive and accessible systems that recognize and accommodate the unique needs of migrants with I/DD. By fostering a more compassionate and supportive environment, we can help ensure that all individuals, regardless of their background or abilities, have the opportunity to thrive.

References

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. (n.d.). Public Charge. Retrieved from USCIS.

Migration Policy Institute. (2020). Fact Sheet: Public Charge Rule. Retrieved from Migration Policy Institute.



Did You Know?

Did you Know that Pride started in NYC?

June brings with it warm summer days and the colorful celebrations of Pride Month. As we engage in these celebrations, let's do so intentionally and reflect on the meaning behind our actions. Let's ensure that our efforts go beyond performative actions. At AHRC Nassau and affiliated companies we are committed to learning and unlearning, listening and amplifying LGBTQIA+ voices, adopting an intersectional lens in the work we do, advocating for inclusive policies, and creating inclusive & safer spaces, among other things. In our commitment to continuous learning, this Quarter's Did you Know section will focus on embracing an intersectional approach to LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

The History of Pride: From Stonewall to Intersectional Liberation

Pride, now celebrated globally with parades, festivals, and a vibrant show of LGBTQIA+ culture, has a rich history rooted in struggle, resistance, and intersectional activism. The journey from clandestine gatherings to worldwide celebrations is marked by significant events and influential figures who have championed the cause for equality and justice.

The modern LGBTQIA+ rights movement is often traced back to the Stonewall Riots, which began on June 28, 1969. The Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City's Greenwich Village, was the epicenter of these historic uprisings. Police raids on gay bars were common at the time, but the raid on Stonewall sparked an unprecedented resistance. Patrons, many of whom were marginalized by society, including drag queens, transgender people, and homeless youth, fought back against the police oppression.

Among the key figures of the Stonewall Riots was Marsha P. Johnson, a Black trans woman and a drag queen. Johnson, alongside Sylvia Rivera, played a crucial role in the riots and later co-founded the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) and the STAR organizations that provided support for unhoused queer youth and advocated for transgender rights. Johnson's activism extended beyond Stonewall, as she became a symbol of resistance and a tireless advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights until her mysterious death in 1992.



Did You Know?

Did you Know that Pride started in NYC?

Continued...

Following the Stonewall Riots, the first Pride march took place in New York City on June 28, 1970, commemorating the first anniversary of the uprising. This march set the precedent for annual Pride events worldwide. The 1970s saw the emergence of numerous LGBTQIA+ organizations, and the movement gained momentum as it fought for visibility, equal rights, and the decriminalization of homosexuality.

Throughout the decades, Pride has grown to encompass a broad spectrum of identities and issues within the LGBTQIA+ community. It has become a time for celebration, reflection, and activism, highlighting both the progress made and the ongoing struggles.

Intersectionality and the Connection to Disability Justice

The fight for LGBTQIA+ liberation is deeply intertwined with other social justice movements, including the Disability Justice movement. The concept of intersectionality, introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw, is crucial to understanding how various forms of oppression overlap and impact people who belong to multiple marginalized groups.

Disability Justice, a framework developed by queer activists of color with disabilities, emphasizes the need for an inclusive and accessible movement that addresses the diverse needs of the community. The ten principles of Disability Justice, outlined by the organization Sins Invalid, highlight the importance of intersectionality, leadership of those most impacted, and collective liberation.

Marsha P. Johnson's work exemplifies the intersection of LGBTQIA+ and Disability Justice. Johnson, who lived with mental health issues, demonstrated how the struggles for mental health rights and LGBTQIA+ rights are interconnected. She often spoke about the need for comprehensive support systems that recognize the holistic experiences of marginalized people.



Did You Know?

Did you Know that Pride started in NYC?

Continued...

Despite significant progress, the LGBTQIA+ community continues to face challenges, including discrimination, violence, and lack of access to healthcare and employment opportunities. The intersection of LGBTQIA+ rights with Disability Justice is particularly relevant in addressing these ongoing issues. Ensuring that Pride and related movements are inclusive of people with disabilities is crucial for achieving true equality.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the contributions of LGBTQIA+ people with disabilities and a push towards making Pride events more accessible. This includes providing sign language interpreters, creating wheelchair-accessible spaces, and offering sensory-friendly environments.

The history of Pride is a testament to the power of collective action and the importance of intersectional advocacy. From the Stonewall Riots to the ongoing fight for Disability Justice, the LGBTQIA+ liberation movement has continually evolved to include and uplift all members of the community. As we celebrate Pride, it is essential to honor the legacy of activists like Marsha P. Johnson and continue striving for a world where everyone, regardless of their identity or ability, can live with dignity and freedom. Today, a monument commemorating the life and work of Marsha P. Johnson can be visited in Brooklyn.



Words & Concepts of the Quarter

Mental Health in the I/DD Community

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Approximately 30% of all people with IDD will have a mental health issue at some point in their lives. People with IDD are also more likely to be subjected to trauma, and they may be more susceptible and easily hurt by these occurrences because they may not be able to process their thoughts as easily as others, or they may have less access to the social support needed to cope with these feelings.

People with IDD are especially sensitive to coexisting mental health issues such as major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, psychotic illnesses, impulse control difficulties, and others.

Most mental health practitioners have limited training in meeting the requirements of the IDD community and their mental health, and system structures frequently separate care, despite the fact that problems can be complicated and overlap.

Considerations and challenges for attending to the mental health of people with IDD include early detection of mental health conditions, which frequently requires caregiver and family input, as well as information from a variety of other collateral sources; the importance of trauma informed and person-centered care; the promotion of self-determination through the use of decision supports; and the use of approaches such as applied behavior analysis to develop treatment plans.

- People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) often have co-occurring mental health conditions.
- Getting treatment for co-occurring IDD and mental health conditions typically requires accessing bifurcated care across two siloed care systems.
- Even though the lack of integrated care options for people with IDD and mental health conditions and the need for a skilled workforce have long been recognized, system structural problems and professional training gaps persist.



- In the mid-1900s, one school of thought held that people with developmental disabilities could not also have mental illnesses, and that any behavioral disorders were the product of intellectual incapacity.
- However, research has revealed that the frequency of mental illness among people with developmental impairments is higher than it is in the general population.
- Psychiatric disorders, such as major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, psychotic disorders, anxiety disorders, impulse control disorders, major neurocognitive disorders, and stereotypic movement disorder, have been shown to be three to four times more common in people with IDD than in the general population.
- Psychiatric diseases may manifest differently in people with intellectual developmental disabilities than in the general population.
- Attending to the complexity of racial prejudices in how people may be recognized, diagnosed, supported, or treated is as crucial in identifying and dealing with people with IDD.
- A cookie-cutter approach does not function well in the IDD population since there is so much variation.
- People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who have co-occurring mental health issues must frequently seek treatment for these conditions by transitioning from the developmental disabilities system, where they are generally served, to the mental health system.
- The legal, regulatory, policy, and practice standards for mental health and developmental disabilities are different, putting the burden of care integration on the people rather than the systems.
- System and policy reforms can help to integrate care for people with IDD who have mental health issues, but more work is needed to develop a solid continuum of care for this population.



Mental Health is Important

Please click the title of each video to access the link



There's no shame in taking care of your mental health

by Sangu Delle

When stress got to be too much for TED Fellow Sangu Delle, he had to confront his own deep prejudice: that men shouldn't take care of their mental health. In a personal talk, Delle shares how he learned to handle anxiety in a society that's uncomfortable with emotions. As he says: "Being honest about how we feel doesn't make us weak -- it makes us human."



The mental health benefits of storytelling for health care workers

by Laurel Braitman

Health care workers are under more stress than ever before. How can they protect their mental health while handling new and complex pressures? TED Fellow Laurel Braitman shows how writing and sharing personal stories helps physicians, nurses, medical students and other health professionals connect more meaningfully with themselves and others -- and make their emotional well-being a priority.

This Quarter...

May

Mental Health Awareness Month

Raises awareness for those living with mental health issues. This month also seeks to support families or communities who are impacted by mental health issues.

[Learn more](#)



Older Americans Month

Celebrates how older Americans contribute to the United States. The 2023 theme is Aging Unbound, which offers an opportunity to explore diverse aging experiences and discuss how communities can combat stereotypes. Join us in promoting flexible thinking about aging – and how we all benefit when older adults remain engaged, independent, and included.

[Learn more](#)



Jewish American Heritage Month

In 2020 the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia repositioned Jewish American Heritage Month to empower communities across the country to celebrate the history of Jewish people in America; educate diverse public audiences about Jewish culture; and spark crucial conversations about the American Jewish present and future.

[Learn more](#)



Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (as of 2009, officially changed from Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month) is observed in the United States during the month of May, and recognizes the contributions and influence of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans to the history, culture, and achievements of the United States.

[Learn more](#)



ALS Awareness Month

A campaign to spread awareness of and raise funds for research for a cure for ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease).

[Learn more](#)



Haitian Heritage Month

Haitian Heritage Month is a nationally recognized month celebrated in May every year. It is a great time to celebrate the vibrant culture, distinct art, delectable cuisine, and to get to know people of Haitian origin.

[Learn more](#)



Speech and Hearing Awareness Month

Better Hearing and Speech Month (BHSM), founded in 1927 by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). Each May, this annual event provides an opportunity to raise awareness about hearing and speech problems, and to encourage people to think about their own hearing and get their hearing checked.



[Learn more](#)

Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Awareness Month

May is Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness of the alarming number of Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit individuals, and people who have gone missing or have been murdered in the United States.

[Learn more](#)



June

Immigrant Heritage Month

Encourages all Americans to celebrate the monumental contributions that immigrants have made — and continue to make — every day.

[Learn more](#)



Pride Month

June is LGBTQ+ Pride Month! Since it was first recognized on a federal level in 1999, Pride Month has served as a time to celebrate the LGBTQ+ pioneers who fought for equality through art, culture, civic action, community service, and more.

[Learn more](#)



Black Lives Matter Month

Black Lives Matter is working inside and outside of the system to heal the past, reimagine the present, and invest in the future of Black lives through policy change, investment in our communities, and a commitment to arts and culture.

[Learn more](#)



Caribbean American Heritage Month

During Caribbean-American Heritage Month, we celebrate the achievements and dreams of the millions of people of Caribbean origin now living in the United States while honoring the shared history of joy and perseverance that has united and enriched life across our region for centuries.

[Learn more](#)



June

Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

Age is the greatest risk factor for Alzheimer's disease, but not the only one. While some brain changes are inevitable as we age, there is a growing body of research to suggest that adopting healthy lifestyle behaviors may help our brains age healthier.

[Learn more](#)



Black Music Month

The annual June observance started more than 40 years ago, but a new generation is now offering fresh ways to celebrate Black Music Month's ideals of artistry and economic power.

[Learn more](#)



Days of the Quarter

May 1 International Workers Day



[Learn more](#)

May 1 Beltane



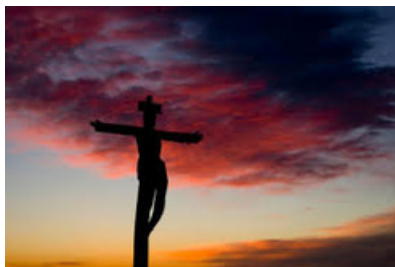
[Learn More](#)

May 3 Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Women's Equal Pay Day



[Learn more](#)

May 3 Orthodox Good Friday



[Learn more](#)

May 4 National Day of Prayer



[Learn more](#)

May 5 Missing and Murdered Indigenous People Awareness Day



[Learn More](#)

May 5 Cinco de Mayo - Battle of Puebla



[Learn more](#)

May 5 Orthodox Easter



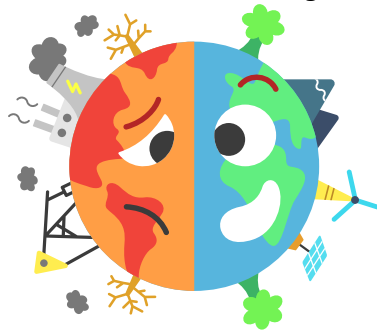
[Learn more](#)

May 5-6 Yom HaShoah/Holocaust Memorial Day



[Learn more](#)

May 15 International Day of Families



[Learn more](#)

May 16 International Day of Living Together in Peace



[Learn more](#)

May 16 Global Accessibility Awareness Day



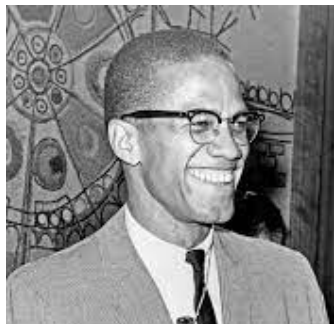
[Learn more](#)

May 17 International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia



[Learn more](#)

May 19 Malcolm X's Birthday



[Learn more](#)

May 20 Asian Gold Ribbon Day



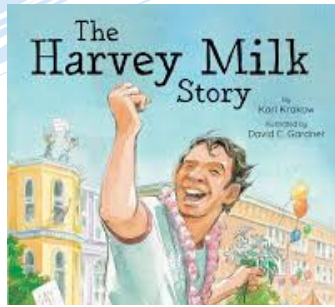
[Learn more](#)

May 21 World Day of Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development



[Learn more](#)

May 22 Harvey Milk Day (LGBTQIA+ Civil Rights Leader)



[Learn more](#)

May 23 Vesak, or Buddha Jayanti, Buddha Purnima, and Buddha Day



[Learn more](#)

May 22 Declaration of the Bab (Baha'i)



[Learn more](#)

May 25 Africa Day



[Learn more](#)

May 27 Memorial Day



[Learn more](#)

May 29 Ascension of Baha'u'llah



[Learn more](#)



June

June 2 Native American Citizenship Act of 1924



[Learn more](#)

June 8 Race Unity Day



[Learn more](#)

June 10 Dragon Boat Festival



[Learn more](#)

June 11 Puerto Rican Day Parade



[Learn more](#)

June 12 Anne Frank Day



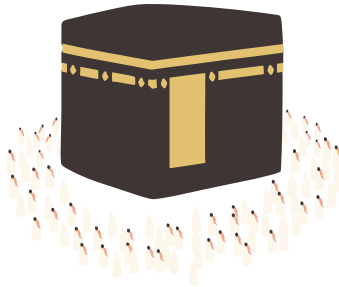
[Learn more](#)

June 14 Flag Day



[Learn more](#)

June 14 Hajj Begins



[Learn more](#)

June 15 LGBTQIA+ Equal Pay Awareness Day



[Learn more](#)

June 16 Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev



[Learn more](#)

June 19 Juneteenth



[Learn more](#)

June 19 International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict



[Learn more](#)

June 20 World Refugee Day



[Learn more](#)

June 20 summer solstice



[Learn more](#)

June 20 Litha



[Learn more](#)

June 26 Anniversary of Legalization of Same-Sex Marriage in the U.S



[Learn more](#)

June 27 Helen Keller Birthday



[Learn more](#)

June 28 Pride Day/ Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots



[Learn more](#)

Call for Submissions, Feedback and Suggestions

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Monthly Newsletter invites contributions to our monthly publication that fits into the following categories:

- News items and announcements
- Short stories
- Recognitions
- Member profiles



Tell us what you want to see more of!

Send us your feedback!



Submit your materials to:
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