

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) e-Zine

At Enterprise Bank, people and relationships come first. We encourage and foster a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion, where everyone feels valued and respected. We are committed to a caring workplace that recognizes the importance of making a meaningful, positive difference in the lives of our team members, customers, and communities. Please [click here](#) for more information. To learn about Enterprise Bank's history and Core Values, [click here](#).

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Personal views and opinions expressed here are those of individual volunteer contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Enterprise Bank.



# Welcome All to 2023!!

## New Year, New Me, and New E-Zine!

By Megan Pardoe

The past three months have featured a variety of fun holidays to celebrate. Some were highlighted in the last E-zine, such as National Coming Out Day, Indigenous People's Day, Diwali, Las Posadas, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Winter Solstice. There were also several that we didn't get a chance to cover, such as the spooky and sweet Halloween holiday, food-filled Thanksgiving, and Hannukah, among others. However, we've now begun a fresh, new year—a time for reflection on the many memories of 2022 and for looking forward to the new memories we'll make in the year ahead.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2022, closing out the year, Enterprise Bank held several holidays and activities! On October 20<sup>th</sup>, the Pride C.O.R.P.S. held an event to commemorate Spirit Day, a day of visibility for the LGBTQ+ community and for building awareness of the bullying and harassment that the community faces. We also raised money for The Center for Hope and Healing Inc. during the event.

Our Chelmsford and Drum Hill branches also celebrated Diwali, the Festival of Lights, in October.



# Welcome All to 2023!!

## New Year, New Me, and New E-Zine!

(continued)

The bank was closed for Veterans Day on November 11<sup>th</sup> and each of our branch regions observed the holiday by donating \$500 dollars to local veterans organizations. In addition, our Veteran's Resource Group held a Veterans Appreciation Lunch and was able to donate \$1000 and over 100 blankets to the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter 47.

The Tewksbury Center branch team, in honor of Thanksgiving, handed out turkeys at the Tewksbury Community Pantry—they passed out 80 turkey dinners in total.

Enterprise also participated in the Lowell Sun Santa Fund with a Sun Santa Breakfast and a raffle on December 15<sup>th</sup>. In celebration of the holiday season, the branches and back office participated in our annual Deck the Doors contest, decorating to the theme of Candy Cane Lane. Congrats to all the winners!!

Now, we turn to the new year and what 2023 will hold for us all. Personally, I hope to focus on improving my mental health and spending quality time with family and friends in 2023. I know that, for a lot of people, the start of a new year can bring anxiety about meeting goals. I, myself, also used to fall into this mindset. I would pressure myself into following extreme diets for weight loss, would force new hobbies upon myself, and would push myself outside of my comfort zone. These goals can be achieved, but must be approached in a healthy and responsible way. That's why, for 2023, I am going to focus on myself and my happiness.





# **Welcome All to 2023!!**

## **New Year, New Me, and New E-Zine!**

(continued)

I want to key in on my mental health and to work on becoming more focused and at peace with myself. To start, I'll be indulging in self care, such as doing face masks, painting my nails, and allowing myself time to relax with my favorite books, movies, and TV shows. I am also going to continue going to therapy and appreciating what I can do for myself, both mentally and physically.

I would like to thank all of those who wrote for this quarter's e-zine: Luisa Bedoya, Kevin Bruckenstein, Eddie Enea, Edie Joyce, Therese Leone, Kira Morehouse, Katherine O'Neil, and Sophy Theam!

I hope everyone has a happy and healthy 2023, and that we all can look back fondly on our achievements of 2022.

- Megan Pardoe - Relationship Associate II - Nashua Main St Branch



Shutterstock



# Louis Braille

By: Kevin Bruckenstein

January 4<sup>th</sup> marks the birthday of Louis Braille, a French educator, musician, researcher, and—most notably—inventor of the braille code, a globally-accepted system of raised dots designed to enable the blind to read and write.

Braille was born on January 4, 1809, in the small village of Coupvray, France. The son of a harness maker, Braille injured his right eye while playing with an awl (a sharp tool used to make holes in leather) in his father's shop when he was three years old. Although he received medical care, infection set in and spread to his other eye leaving him completely blind.

Few options existed for the blind at the time, but Braille's parents wanted him to receive an education. He began attending school in their village, learning through listening and memorization. Proving himself an exceptional student, Braille received a scholarship to the National Institute for Blind Youth in Paris—among the first schools for blind students in the world—when he was ten (1819).

There, Braille and his classmates were taught to read by tracing raised printed letters. This method of reading was slow and difficult to master, and the embossed text was exceptionally space-consuming to write, resulting in heavy books. As a result, Braille became interested in creating a more efficient reading and writing system for the blind, reaching a major turning point when a retired French army officer named Charles Barbier visited the school.

Barbier had devised a code that used different combinations of 12 raised dots to represent different sounds, which he called sonography. The code, which he called “night writing,” was intended to help soldiers communicate silently and without light during the night—light or sound could give away the soldiers' positions to the enemy. However, the army did not take to the idea, so Barbier pursued its application as a tool to help the blind instead.

a	i	o	u	é	è
an	in	on	un	eu	ou
b	d	g	j	v	z
p	t	q	ch	f	s

Source: History Today



Source: Encyclopædia Britannica



Source: History Today

# Louis Braille

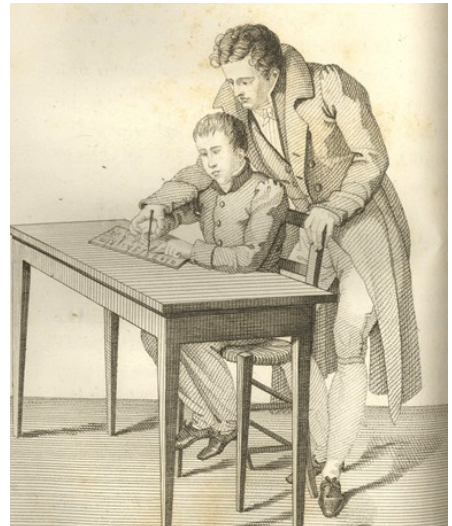
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Braille immediately saw the potential in Barbier's idea, but recognized that it had to be improved. Sonography was complicated to learn and use, and its sounds-based design was not practical. Over the next three years, Braille worked on refining the code, and by the time he was 15 (1824), he had devised his own code that used only six dots—two columns of three dots each—that could be used to produce 64 combinations corresponding to letters and punctuation. Importantly, Braille's six-dot code allowed for a fingertip to encompass an entire cell unit with one impression and to move rapidly from one cell to the next, enabling faster and easier reading. Later, he expanded the code to incorporate numbers and musical notation.

In 1829, Braille published a book describing the tactile reading and writing system that now bears his name: *Method of Writing Words, Music, and Plain Songs by Means of Dots for Use by the Blind and Arranged for Them*. He became an apprentice teacher at the National Institute for Blind Youth when he was 19 and went on to become a teacher there when he was 24. The classes he taught included algebra, grammar, and geometry, and he taught to both sighted and blind students. Already able to play the piano and cello, Braille learned to play the organ as well—an instrument he became quite adept at.

In 1852, at the age of 43, Braille died of tuberculosis. While the braille code failed to gain widespread adoption during Braille's lifetime, it has since been accepted globally and has received adaptations to most languages worldwide. Today's braille remains very similar to the code as Braille created it, with most of the modifications focusing on incorporating contractions.

A century after his death, Braille's remains were moved to Paris for burial in the Panthéon (minus his hands, which were kept in his birthplace of Coupvray). His childhood home in Coupvray, which is now a museum, features a plaque that reads, "He opened the doors of knowledge to all those who cannot see."



Source: American Foundation for the Blind

Sources:

[Louis Braille | Biography & Facts | Britannica](#)

[NBP - About Braille - Who is Louis Braille?](#)

[Louis Braille - Facts, Invention & Death - Biography](#)

[Overview - Louis Braille: His Legacy and Influence | Exhibitions - Library of Congress \(loc.gov\)](#)

[The Story of Louis Braille - Paths to Literacy](#)

[Valentin Haüy and the Royal Institute for Blind Youth in Paris France \(placesinfrance.com\)](#)

[NLS Factsheet: About Braille - National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled \(NLS\) | Library of Congress \(loc.gov\)](#)

[Louis Becomes a Teacher | American Foundation for the Blind \(afb.org\)](#)



# National Day of Racial Healing

By: Sophy Theam

In August 2022, Kira Morehouse and I were able to attend a series of workshops for Racial Healing Circle Practitioners with others in the community.

The American Association of Colleges & University describes the National Day of Racial Healing, observed every January after MLK Day, as an opportunity “to engage in activities, events, or strategies that promote healing and foster engagement around the issues of racism, bias, inequity, and injustice in our society. It is an opportunity for people and organizations to come together in their common humanity and take collective action to create a more just and equitable world.”

January 17, 2023 is the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual National Day of Racial Healing. According to Darcy Orellana, Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the [Center for Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation](#) for Middlesex Community College: “The 7<sup>th</sup> annual National Day of Racial Healing is an opportunity to come together to listen deeply and share our truths in order to build our collective capacity towards racial equity, justice, and transformative change. At the MCC Center for Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation we are committed to the practice of using racial healing circles not as a cure to racism, but as one way for us to truly listen to one another and to build authentic, trusting relationships. By bringing people together to listen and learn from each another through sharing stories and truth telling, we challenge the idea of a hierarchy of human value based on race so that we can take the collective action needed to eliminate racism and work together creating racially equitable and just communities.”

Kira and I were among approximately 25 community members who participated in the August 2022 workshop.



Photo Credit: MCC Center for Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation



# National Day of Racial Healing

By: Sophy Theam

Kira had the excellent suggestion of getting quotes from fellow participants, so I reached out to some of them and asked what the Racial Healing Circles meant to them:

"One of the best things about RHCs is that we take the time to listen and really hear each other's stories. Sharing stories is how we forge stronger connections and build a new community."

**-Jordana Shaw, Interim Director of Libraries, Middlesex Community College Libraries.**

"So often, there are not enough opportunities for individuals to share their stories uninterrupted or unadulterated. This is especially true for people of color. The act of listening to honor and understand another person is incredibly powerful. The racial healing circle experience affirms the healing that comes from giving another person your undivided attention and respect. This class allowed me to feel the healing that can come from being vulnerable with another person. It gave me the honor of quietly and intentionally bearing witness to another person's lived experience. I walked away feeling connected to the others in my group in a way I didn't expect and I learned a lot about myself that I will carry with me into every interaction I have moving forward."

**-Susanne Duato, Vice President of the Board; Girls Inc. Lowell.**

This is just an introduction to the concept of Racial Healing Circles that Kira and I would like to share with our team members. Stay tuned for more information on this topic!





# Lunar New Year 2023: Year of the Rabbit

By: Kira Morehouse

January 22, 2023, symbolizes the beginning of a new year within several Asian countries and cultures where people follow a lunisolar calendar. More than 1.5 billion people celebrate Lunar New Year, including the people of China, Vietnam, the Koreans, Singapore, and Malaysia.

What is a lunisolar calendar, you may ask? A lunisolar calendar is one where the year is divided according to the phases of the moon and adjusted in average to fit the length of the solar cycle. So, a lunisolar year might consist of 12 alternating lunar months of 29 and 30 days each, totaling 353 to 385 days per year. Basically, it indicates both the moon phase and the time of the solar year—the position of the sun in the earth's sky. Therefore, the Lunar New Year marks the first new moon of the lunisolar calendar.

According to the Chinese Zodiac, each Lunar New Year marks the beginning of a new Zodiac sign which is represented by different animals. 2023's Lunar Year is represented by a rabbit. According to the traits of the Chinese Zodiac, the rabbit is a tame and tender animal, swift in movement so that people born in the Year of the Rabbit usually have a soft and tender personality.

Meanwhile, did you know that Chinese and Lunar New Year are not the same, but are often confused with one another? Despite being related, there are a few noteworthy differences according to a [chinahighlights.com](https://chinahighlights.com) article. Basically, the Chinese New Year is specific to China while references to Lunar New Year are more inclusive of other countries and cultures who celebrate similarly around this time of the lunisolar calendar.



[Lunar New Year - The Bellevue Collection](#)



# Lunar New Year 2023: Year of the Rabbit

By: Kira Morehouse

“In contexts outside of China, referring to Lunar New Year as ‘Chinese New Year’ and vice versa can come off as insensitive and offensive because it ignores other cultures, all of which have their own unique traditions, beliefs, and celebrations.” So, while some traditions are shared and may have influenced one another historically, there are many that are unique to each individual country or culture. In China, Lunar New Year is also called the Spring Festival or Chinese New Year. While in Vietnam, Lunar New Year is known as Vietnamese New Year, and their zodiac signs include the Cat instead of the Rabbit and the Buffalo instead of the Ox. Then, in South Korea, Lunar New Year is called Seollal. Decorations, traditional ways of dressing, and foods eaten in celebration will vary across all these examples depending on the country and/or culture being represented.

Ultimately, when speaking about Lunar New Year, context matters. If speaking to Chinese people or someone that does not traditionally celebrate a different Lunar New Year, then it is alright to say “Chinese New Year.” When speaking to a person with other Asian heritage about their New Year, it is best to say “Lunar New Year,” or to use culture-specific terms that reflect respect for their individual and uniquely identified heritage.

All of us at Enterprise Bank wished a happy Lunar New Year to those who celebrated last year and look forward to supporting more community events around this holiday.

Check out this great photo from a couple of years ago (just prior to the Global Pandemic in January, 2020) where our Lexington team were honored to be part of the Chinese American Association of Lexington’s Lunar New Year celebration.



Enterprise Bank is in Lexington, Massachusetts.  
January 14, 2020 · 🌟

Some of our team members including CEO Jack Clancy and Lexington Branch Relationship Manager Veronica Caira had a great time at the [Chinese American Association of Lexington - CAAL's](#) Lunar New Year celebration! It was a wonderful event put on by a terrific organization!





# Holocaust Remembrance Day: Connecting Our Past to Our Present

By Megan Pardoe



Source: [Historians Reflect on International Holocaust Remembrance Day | History at Illinois](#)

The Holocaust, or the Shoah, is one of the greatest atrocities ever committed in human history. Six million Jews and millions of others—including members of the LGBTQ+ community, the disabled, Soviet citizens and prisoners of war, the Romani people, Jehovah's Witnesses, Serb citizens, criminals, and German political offenders—were murdered at the hands of Nazi Germany from 1941 to 1945. On November 1, 2005, the United Nations designated January 27<sup>th</sup>, the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp, as the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

From an event as horrific and appalling as the Holocaust, the most important thing we can take are lessons—lessons about what led to that tragedy, and lessons on the resilience, kindness, and hope demonstrated in the stories of survivors. One of those stories is that of Holocaust survivor Dita Kraus.

Her life began in Prague in 1929 as an only child. She remembers her early childhood as carefree; her family was secular, and she didn't even know she was Jewish until she was eight. Dita loved to read books, paint, and write with her friends growing up. However, this all changed in 1939 when Nazi Germany invaded Prague and began restricting the lives of Jewish people. Her father lost his job and her home was given to a German family. In 1942, when Dita was 13, she and her family were placed in the Terezin Ghetto. Then, in 1943, they were sent to the concentration camp Auschwitz.

# Holocaust Remembrance Day: Connecting Our Past to Our Present

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Dita at 13, while living in the Ghetto. The marking of "Jew" on her clothes required by the Nazi regime.

Source: [The librarian of Auschwitz - The Jewish Chronicle \(thejc.com\)](http://thejewishchronicle.com)

Dita and her mother were sent to the women's barracks of the family block, which was used as part of the deception that Auschwitz was not a death camp but a labor camp. This block held many of the children of Auschwitz as a type of daycare to keep kids away from the working adults. This block was overseen by Dr. Mengele, also known as "The Angel of Death" due to the inhumane experiments he was responsible for conducting on humans.

Since Dita was one of the older children at 14 years old, she was chosen to be an assistant and to look after the children in the block. Fredy Hirsch was the prisoner who oversaw the daycare. He and Dita knew each other from Prague as Fredy had been a sports teacher there. He asked Dita to care for eight books that were considered contraband in the camp, ownership of which was punishable by death. Dita recalls a few of the books: *A Short History of the World*, a geographical atlas, a book by Sigmund Freud, and a book of short stories.

Dita would hold onto these books throughout the day by keeping them hidden in her prisoner uniform. When the guards weren't around, she would give the books out in the daycare and help children learn to read and write. Those that could read would share the stories from the books with adults and children who could not. The atlas was used to teach basic geography and illustrate where others in the camp were from. Dita was able to bring a glimmer of light to the children of Auschwitz in their dark days. They were given the invaluable gifts of education, imagination, and reading because of the risk she took.

Dita succeeded in hiding these books and bringing education to the children of Auschwitz until July of 1944 when she and her mother were sent to another camp—Bergen-Belsen. In April of 1945, Bergen-Belsen was liberated and both Dita and her mother gained their freedom. However, they both contracted typhus and Dita's mother died. Later, Dita learned that her father died in July of 1944 from starvation. By the time Dita turned sixteen, she had recovered from typhus and was able to leave the camp. She returned to her home in Prague as an orphan with the meager belongings she possessed.

From there, she worked on rebuilding her life with other survivors and, later on, got married and started a family.



# Holocaust Remembrance Day: Connecting Our Past to Our Present

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Drawing of the women's block by Dita from memory.

Source: [The librarian of Auschwitz - The Jewish Chronicle \(thejc.com\)](https://thejc.com/2012/01/27/dita-kraus-drawing-of-the-womens-block/)

Even after her life in the camps, books remained a key part of Dita's life—her husband was an author and she became an English teacher. She loved reading with her students and recognized the importance of sharing her own story with them. In 2012, *The Librarian of Auschwitz* by Antonio Iturbe was published, a book inspired by Dita's story.

January 27<sup>th</sup> is a day of remembrance; a day to reflect on the terrible history of the Holocaust and to commemorate the millions of victims and their stories. It's stories like Dita's that remind us that, even in the face of overwhelming evil and suffering, hope, kindness, selflessness, and strength can be found.

Sources:

[The librarian of Auschwitz - The Jewish Chronicle \(thejc.com\)](https://thejc.com/2012/01/27/dita-kraus-drawing-of-the-womens-block/)  
[Dita Kraus | About](#)

# Time for a Different Outlook on Black History to Start in 2023: 28 Days Are Not Enough

By: Kira Morehouse

Back in 2014, I had the pleasure of being a volunteer with a group of folks who share a common love for TED Talks, to the point of us coming together to host our own local TEDx version for the Greater Manchester region which we hosted at Southern New Hampshire University. That year, among our amazing line-up of speakers and performers, was a great topic presented by locally-based artist and educator, Joel Christian Gill, with his talk titled [“28 Days Are Not Enough.”](#)

This title and topic were specifically in reference to the idea that there are an infinite number of inspiring stories to be told about African American lives and positive impact. However, each February during Black History Month, only some of these stories come to light which are often the same ones being told over and over again, as if their existences were rare, scarce, and limited. As each year passes, wouldn't it be great if more emphasis were placed on the fact that these stories are also American history to be shared alongside all our nation's history, learned as part of mainstream education and beyond?

As we head into the first quarter of 2023, many of us look forward to all kinds of upcoming cultural and historical observances. For example, January is when we celebrate the new year. Then, in terms of Black history, which is also American history, the 15<sup>th</sup> is when our nation celebrates the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, also observed on Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> as a federal holiday.

Moving ahead to February, this is when we celebrate Black History Month with thoughtfulness about the past and why it is still important for all of us across our nation to keep learning about Black history.

However, just like we rolled over from MLK Day into Black History Month, it can be almost too easy to overlook the fact that there are some lesser recognized, but noteworthy dates that fall somewhere in between or outside of these specific celebrations. Also, with Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy being focused on Civil Rights as a movement for all Americans to feel solidarity around, his legacy should also be remembered within the context of his racial and ethnic heritage which helped uplift and level the playing field for Black people to be seen as equals among all people.

Furthermore, did you know that the month of January also includes the birthday of trailblazer Oprah Winfrey, also known as the “Queen of Media” for being North America's first Black billionaire? She is someone who continues to inspire others by sharing openly about her life's challenges, which she overcame to find success beyond what most people could ever dream.



# Time for a Different Outlook on Black History to Start in 2023: 28 Days Are Not Enough

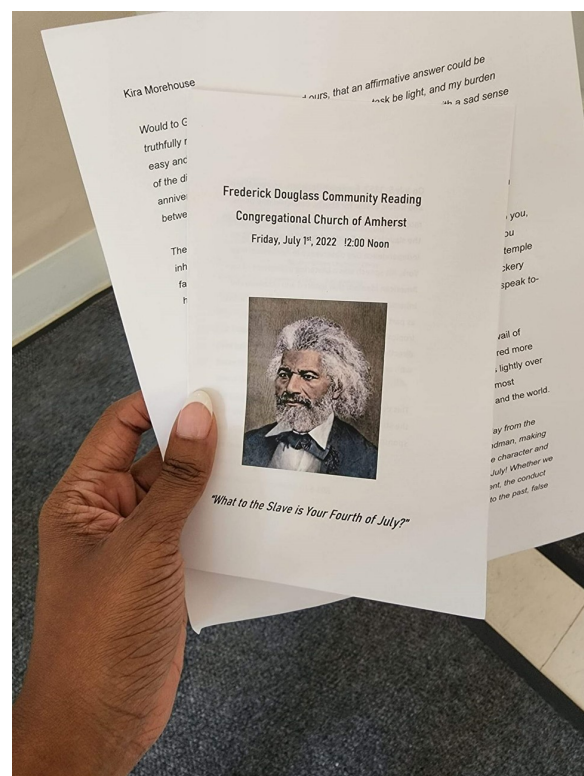
By: Kira Morehouse



In 2018, Lowellians were fortunate to have Oprah visit and share some of her life experience in front of a live audience at UMass Lowell and some team members from Enterprise Bank were present.

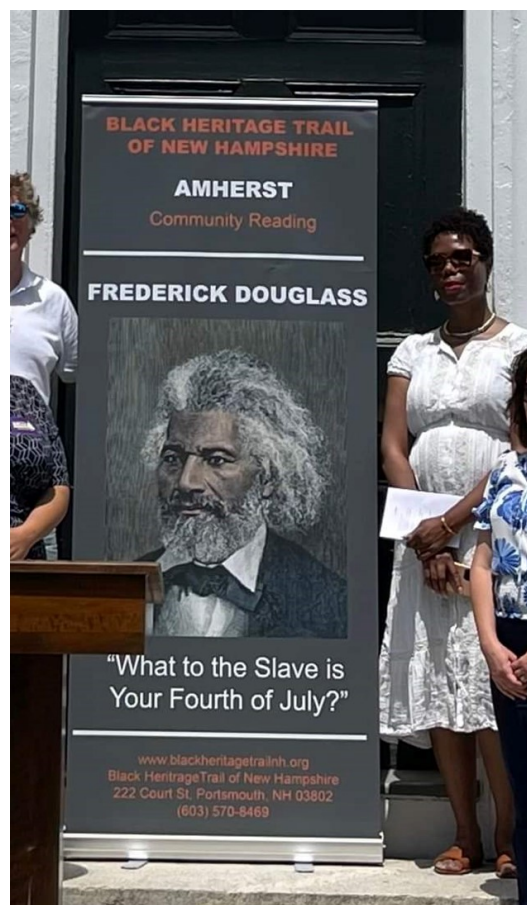
Additionally, did you know that February 14th is an opportunity to celebrate the birthday of Fredrick Douglass? Being of multi-racial heritage, including African descent, he was born into slavery. He gained his freedom and dedicated his life towards sharing his story as a former enslaved person, becoming an abolitionist and bringing about social reform by changing the hearts and minds of many through his speeches and efforts so that, one day, all enslaved people could also be free.

His birth date may be a lesser-known date on the calendar, but his life, impact, and accomplishments are no less worthy of celebration compared to the others mentioned above. Beyond the first quarter, July is also a time to recognize Douglass and his contributions, including his essay, "What to the Slave is Your Fourth of July?" Many communities across New Hampshire do celebrate it by holding a statewide reading under the coordination of the Black Heritage Trail of NH.



# Time for a Different Outlook on Black History to Start in 2023: 28 Days Are Not Enough

By: Kira Morehouse



By the time March rolls around, we roll into another opportunity to learn about the American abolitionist movement, but from a different perspective—through celebrating the birthday of Harriet Tubman on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Harriet Tubman was known for her bravery in leading missions to rescue slaves from southern states, leading them into the northern regions of America and parts of Canada where they could reclaim their rights to freedom.

Also conveniently taking place in March, how many of us know that the 21<sup>st</sup> is an opportunity to join in the observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination? According to the United Nations website, this annual observance began in 1979 following a brutal incident when police in Sharpeville, South Africa, opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against apartheid that occurred nearly two decades prior in 1960. The 21<sup>st</sup> of March is when the General Assembly of U.N. adopted a program of activities to be undertaken during the second half of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination under the principle of equality.

The observances mentioned above, all taking place within the first quarter of the year, are not limited to one specific month. You can't easily limit a historical figure's life experiences and impact into such a short timeframe when learning and inspiration happen best at anytime and anywhere when the moment is sparked, unhindered by our own timing. So, as great as it is to have a month that is dedicated to Black history, we must always remember to make time for learning from those who have come before us, regardless of the month or day of the year.

People who have lived their lives in such a way that they have left a lasting, positive impact on humanity deserve more than a date, or a limited timeframe that ebbs and flows every 365 days. Understanding that history belongs to everyone in such a way that transcends racial barriers could be the start of a new path forward without the limitation. Let's keep this in mind as we enter 2023, starting the new year with a new outlook of inclusivity and continuity onward.



# World Day of Social Justice

Monday, February 20th, 2023

By: Luisa Bedoya



Photo Source: Colorado State University

**Each year, on February 20<sup>th</sup>, the United Nations and countries, communities, and individuals worldwide observe World Day of Social Justice.**

This year, the observance is devoted to the support of international efforts to promote transitions to formal employment as a necessary condition for reducing poverty and inequalities, advancing decent work, increasing productivity and sustainability, and widening the government's scope of action, especially in times of crisis.

## What is social justice?

Social justice is based on the values of fairness, equality, respect for diversity, access to social protection, and the application of human rights in all spheres of life, including in the workplace. Seeking equity is, by default, seeking social justice. For example, pursuing health equity means pursuing social justice in health, where no one is denied the possibility to be healthy because they belong to a group that has historically been excluded from accessing health resources. The same can be said for education, financial disparities, food and medical insecurities, mental health, housing, and more.

# World Day of Social Justice

## What can you do?

### Educate yourself about social justice issues.

Navigating how to get involved can be overwhelming. The best way to start is to familiarize yourself with social justice issues you're passionate about and research what is being done about them. Whether it's hunger and food insecurity, gun violence, voting rights, or another issue, you'll gain a better understanding of an issue's current state by learning about its history.

### Volunteer at/Discover your local organizations.

Take positive action in your own community. You can learn about issues within your community by watching local news broadcasts, reading the newspaper, and listening to podcasts. Write letters and call your elected city and state officials regarding the issues your community faces. Find your elected officials' contact information [here](#). Writing letters (including emails) is a great way to make your voice heard on things that matter to you.



### Harness the power of social media.

Twitter, Facebook, and other social media platforms have become powerful tools for sharing messages with large audiences without leaving home. They facilitate efforts to focus on, and organize around, important causes. From joining groups, to posting articles and sharing personal experiences, they can help facilitate community building, awareness, and collaboration.

The World Day of Social Justice is just one day, but fighting for social justice is a lifelong pursuit. If you want to make more of an impact, use the day to create a longer-term action plan. There are many adjustments you can make to your routines to raise awareness of issues and help with solutions—you don't have to rearrange your life and change your career to become a social justice advocate!

Sources: [15 Ways to Advance Social Justice in your Community \(ku.edu\)](#)



# Lowell Women's Week

By: Katherine O'Neil

Every March, the city of Lowell celebrates Women's History Month with Lowell Women's Week. Lowell Women's Week aims to honor the women who came before us and celebrate the women of today. Lowell Women's Week hosts and organizes events all month long, which are free and open to the public. The month will conclude with the 28th annual Lowell Women's Week breakfast on March 27th. The theme this year is "Embrace Equity".

Lowell Women's Week is also seeking nominations for their Because of Her award. The Because of Her award recognizes women who demonstrate a strong commitment to the Lowell community and perform exemplary acts of service outside of their regular job responsibilities. To nominate an extraordinary woman in your life, visit this site: <https://lowellwomensweek.org/because-of-her/>

**"The Lowell Women's Week is a component fund of the Greater Lowell community Foundation"**



[Lowell Women's Week | Embrace Equity](#)  
[lowellwomensweek.org](https://lowellwomensweek.org)



[GLCF Announces Lowell Women's Week Scholarship Fund - Greater Lowell Community Foundation \(glcfoundation.org\)](#)



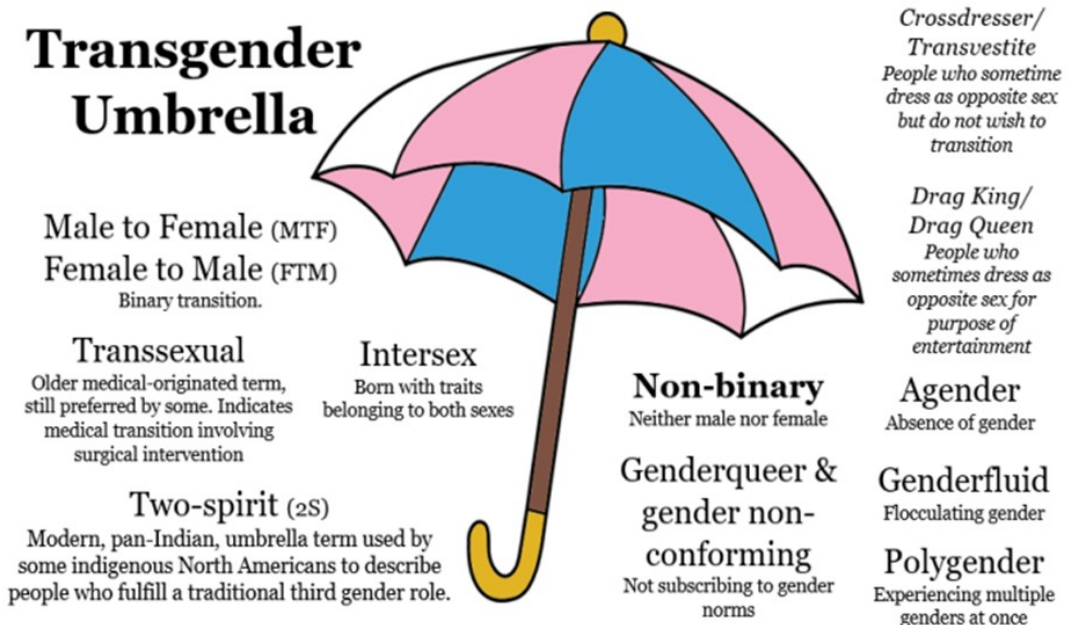
# International Transgender Day of Visibility: Empowering the Trans Voice

By: Megan Pardoe

March 31<sup>st</sup> is International Transgender Day of Visibility, celebrating transgender people, raising awareness of discrimination faced by the transgender community, and celebrating their contributions to society. The observance was started in 2009 by Rachel Crandall in response to the lack of recognition in the LGBTQ+ community for trans people and their stories.

Understanding the difference between sexual and gender identity can be confusing to those who are not familiar with the concepts. Gender identity is how one sees themselves. Gender expression is how one wants to display their gender. Gender attribution is how one's gender is seen by others. Sex assigned at birth is what the medical community labels a person when they are born. Sexual identity is what gender(s) one is sexually attracted to or not.

Understanding and respecting the lives and experiences of the trans community is an important aspect of workplace culture. However, it can be difficult to accomplish if there are no trans people at work or if there aren't people who feel comfortable being out at work. One positive step we can take is ensure that company policies protect and reflect the value of trans employees. We can also work together to create a comfortable environment where people feel safe coming out when, and if, they want to. Lastly, we can invest in trans leadership, in and out of the workplace, to ensure that our trans coworkers' voices are heard.





# International Transgender Day of Visibility: Empowering the Trans Voice

(continued)

Last March, members of the Massachusetts Commission for LGBTQ+ Youth, members of the trans and non-binary communities, and state lawmakers stood on the steps of the State House to declare that the trans community belongs in Massachusetts and everywhere. The event was called *We Are A State of Love: A Gathering of Visible Solidarity with LGBTQ Youth*, and aimed at protesting state bills against the LGBTQ+ community and to support bills that aid the LGBTQ community with social services and health care. It was co-hosted by several state representatives to show protection for, and solidarity with, the trans community of Massachusetts. More than 150 people came out to attend the event.

Former Governor Charlie Baker made an announcement stating, “The Baker-Polito Administration is proud to stand with the LGBTQ youth of Massachusetts in recognition of March 31<sup>st</sup> as International Transgender Day of Visibility. This day honors transgender people in the Commonwealth and celebrates their achievements and accomplishments in raising awareness and promoting equality throughout the state.”



The March 31st, 2022 gathering in front of the Massachusetts State House.

This March 31<sup>st</sup>, we should all take the time to celebrate the trans community and the progress they have made. We can also work together to see what we can do at Enterprise to lift the voices of our trans co-workers, whether they are out or not, and come together to help our community do the same.

## Sources:

[Massachusetts Showed Up On Transgender Day of Visibility | Mass.gov](#)

[How to Celebrate Transgender Employees on TDOV and Year-Round | Out & Equal \(outandequal.org\)](#)

# March 21st—International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

By: Eddie Enea

As I stood at the bus stop on a September morning, I was looking forward to another day in third grade. School at this age was fun, the lunches were great, homework was light. Life was good. I stood with other kids from the neighborhood that attended the same school. Some were my friends, others weren't. There was one kid that intimidated me. He was bigger, stronger, and other kids gravitated towards him. I never understood the allure. The grumble of the bus brought parents closer to where the kids were standing or out of their cars to say goodbye. My mom waved at my sister and me, and in broken English called out to us to have a good day, finishing with the word "besos." Once on the bus, that one kid who now sat prominently in the back of the bus where all the cool kids sat, called out to me, mimicking my mother saying, "your mom talks funny". I've never let go of the feeling I felt at that moment, even to this day. It was the feeling of difference, of the worst kind.



The United Nations recognizes March 21st as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. This is a time, sparked by the killing of 69 demonstrators in 1960 South Africa, who bravely stood against the laws of apartheid or "apartness". This day has drawn high-level world leaders and pushed action to have awareness of racism be a common theme throughout civil decision making.

Some may blindly assume that racism is better today than it was in 1960, so we should take what we can and call it a win. However, racial bias still exists in so many facets of our lives that we become blind to it. The Society for Human Resource Management is the most reputable, unbiased trending human resource information source for all HR professionals. A SHRM study conducted over 5 years, ending in 2021 concluded that "42% of Black workers, 26% of Asian workers, and 21% of Hispanic or Latino workers said they were treated unfairly" (Smart, 2021). The number for white workers: 12%.

Businesses are aware of this and the fact that candidates today mark DEI as one of the top criteria they look for in a new job. Companies throughout the world have made impressive steps to launch and strategically showcase DEI for top talent, and customers. Is that enough? A 2022 Global DEI Survey detailing 192 organizations, representing over 350,000 full-time employees worldwide shows "more than 85% (of the 192 organizations) set qualitative and/or quantitative, measurable goals over the next 12 months" (RealPac, 2022).



[Race, Sex & Age Discrimination \(cochranfirm.com\)](https://www.cochranfirm.com/)



# March 21st—International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

By: Eddie Enea

Numbers are great, but not enough. How do I know? What more could I want?? I want the same thing anyone of color, and their allies would want; to not have to read articles like this, to not have to write articles like this, to not have to think about this. Until that day comes, racism continues. The need for the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination continues.

I never told my mom the story of how I felt that day at the bus stop. The truth is, I know it would hurt her to know that I endured it. Just recently, my 3-year-old daughter Segen noticed the skin tone, and hair color differences in her dolls. Thinking of this article, I asked who she thought she looked like. She looked up at me and said, "Silly daddy, I look like Segen." Lesson learned. Normalizing racial variance within us and the world around us is not just a social obligation, but a necessity to embrace difference. The difference of the best kind.



[Healing a toxic brew of hate, racism, and gun violence in America | AAMC](#)

## Work Cited

REALPAC. "2022GlobalDEI Survey Results Released." Yahoo!Finance, 13 Dec. 2022. Finance.yahoo.com/news/2022-global-dei-survey-results-164000647.html. Accessed 2 Jan. 2023

Smart, Tim. "Report Finds Racism Prevalent in the Workplace." U.S. News, 24 May 2021, www.usnews.com/news/nationalnews/articles/2021-05-24/report-finds-racism-prevalent-in-the-workplace. Accessed 3 Jan. 2023.

# Understanding Ramadan

By: Edie Joyce



[The history of Ramadan | Sky HISTORY TV Channel](#)

Many of us hear references to Ramadan; however, we may not understand its importance or have developed misconceptions. About a quarter of the world's population is Muslim and Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and observed for a period of twenty-nine to thirty days depending on the sightings of the crescent moon. As the Islamic calendar is based on the lunar cycle, the month of Ramadan rotates by approximately ten days each year. In 2023, Ramadan will begin on the evening of Wednesday, March 22, and end at sundown on either Thursday, April 20 or Friday, April 21, depending on the sighting of the moon. Islamic holidays always begin and end at sundown.

Ramadan is broadly known as a month of fasting, yet the time is spent with family and friends, on devotion, reflection, connecting with the physical and spiritual worlds, and reading the Koran, Islam's sacred text. "Ramadan is a call for internal and physical cease-fire" with an emphasis on graciousness, patience, and forgiveness.

The length of the fasting day varies throughout the month of Ramadan due to the increasing daylight. The fast begins at dawn and lasts until dusk and is often broken with *iftar*, an evening meal that typically begins with a sharing of dates, water, and sweet tea followed by nourishing dishes. Before the following sunrise, fasting Muslims eat a meal called *sahur* that contains hydrating and protein-rich foods to sustain them until they break their fasts in the evening. The month of Ramadan concludes with a celebration, *Eid al-Fitr*, where many healthy and delicious foods are shared. Please visit the link below to view recipes for *iftar*, *sahur* and *Eid al-Fitr*. Happy Ramadan!

Sources and Further Reading:

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<https://www.today.com/food/ramadan-iftar-recipes-t251628>  
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# Reflection: Multicultural Holiday Celebration 2022

By: Therese Leone

When I think about the Multicultural Alliance and our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), I think about our Enterprise and the people that spearhead these organizations, their events, and their initiatives. Individuals such as Sophy Theam, Prema Nagathan, Mark Watson, Sixto DeJesus, Jessica Silva, Eddie Enea, and so many more who put their whole hearts and souls into their communities, bringing awareness to all different nationalities and introducing us to different cultures and their traditions.

This year, we were so lucky to have held our first in-person Multicultural Holiday Celebration since the pandemic at the DoubleTree Hotel in Andover. I did not realize the work that went on behind the scenes to make this event happen. Sophy and Prema, event co-chairs, made it look easy. Through the connections they've built over the years, they were able to enlist performers to share beautiful artistry at the celebration in the forms of dance and song. They also managed to facilitate amazing gifts for the children, all the entertainment and talented performances, and—of course—the appearances of Santa and Mrs. Claus!

This leads me to a question: How well do you know about your culture and its traditions? Are you fluent in your ancestral or cultural language(s)? How many unique, culture-specific details can you come up with in a few minutes?

If you are fortunate enough to still have your parents, grandparents, and/or relatives from the old country around, try asking them questions about your family's lineage and finding out about your individual cultures. You may be surprised to find out some unique and wonderful things about your ancestors and where they came from.

The Multicultural Alliance represents all of us here at Enterprise Bank. By being so culturally diverse, we are able to develop and deliver better outcomes, and able to better understand those we serve.

