

Celebrating Diversity During the Holidays

With the main focus of the Holiday Season being primarily on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's, it is possible to overlook the many other celebrations that take place during this time of year. In reality, many different events, both spiritual, religious, and tradition based, are being celebrated in many different ways during these times.

It used to be that being inclusive meant sending out politically correct "Happy Holidays" greeting cards and changing Christmas office parties to "holiday parties." Today, celebrating inclusiveness and diversity is about more than just changing labels and titles. Celebrating diversity and inclusiveness is about using the holiday celebration time to be with friends and family to build understanding and awareness about others.

Three Ways to Build Your Awareness of Diversity and Create an Inclusive Holiday Environment

Learn about other religious or holiday celebrations. Carve out some time from online shopping or a holiday TV show to learn about another culture's celebrations during this time. Watch a TV special about other celebrations, do a Google search on a holiday, or check out books at your local bookstore while gift shopping. Share your learning with others, and use it as a chance to expand the conversation at parties and at the dinner table.

Make no expectations about other religious or holiday celebrations. Realize that people celebrate a variety of holidays during this time of year, and some people choose to celebrate none. Be respectful of these differences by taking interest in other people's traditions and making them feel welcome. Don't be afraid to ask people what holidays they celebrate. Find out what they do during this time of the year that is special. Let it be an opportunity to learn about different cultures and religions and the traditions that accompany them.

Mark your calendar and your address book with other scheduled religious or holiday celebrations. If the calendar or PDA you use does not list holidays like Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Ramadan, and Diwali, find out the dates and record them as reminders. Many programs like Microsoft Outlook allow users to add calendar dates for celebrations from different parts of the world automatically, making this task quick and effortless. Take a few minutes to mark your address book with the holidays that people celebrate. When writing holiday cards, recognize their holiday, and include a little hand-written note acknowledging their celebration.



A Note for Managers and Employees about Religious or Holiday Celebrations...

Here are a few extra things you can do to make their work environments more inclusive during the holidays.

- Make sure your holiday party isn't a Christmas party in disguise. Decorations and food should be general, and not specific to any religion.
- Consider having a New Year's party instead of a holiday party. This type of party can get everyone on board with the company's mission and vision for the New Year.
- Post holiday greetings on for many holidays during the month of December.
- Be respectful of these special dates, and plan events and meetings around various holidays.
- Display a multi-cultural calendar to help all employees stay aware of important cultural events for the rest of the year.
- Be flexible with the needs of different employees about religious or holiday celebrations.
- Encourage employees to share their celebrations through stories, decorations, and foods that they can bring to their workplace.

DLLR Employees:

Prepare to be appreciated!

December 14, 2009 is

Employee Appreciation Day!

“Because We Care”

Let us take care of you, so you can take care of others.

Come and join us as we celebrate and recognize the hard work of our DLLR employees.

When: Monday, December 14

Where: Cafeteria & Lower Level Training Room

Time: 10 a.m.—2 p.m.

There will be various activities including...

Personal Safety for the Holidays by DLLR Police

Financial Information by SECU

Raffles for Special Prizes

Bake Sales (to benefit the Maryland Charity Campaign)

And More...

Stop in for tips for staying healthy and happy this holiday season...

*** Please contact Rachel Indek at 410-767-2982 if you would like to donate to or participate in the bake sale.**

Don't Let Bad Health Steal Your Holiday Happiness



HEALTH RISKS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season can be a time of happiness -- but also health risks. Here are some tips on staying healthy and happy during the holiday season...

***Flu:** Getting an influenza vaccine is important, especially for children, the elderly, and people with respiratory ailments, AIDS or other chronic health problems.

***Shoveling Snow:** Over-exertion may cause heart attack, low-back strain and muscle aches.

***Drunken driving and safe driving:** To avoid traffic fatalities and injuries, use designated drivers. Also, drive at a safe speed, follow at a safe distance, and leave extra time to cope with roads that are congested, slick with snow or rain, or narrowed by snow drifts.

***Stress:** Preparing presents, meals, and parties may lead to pressure that can dampen holiday spirits.

***Dressing smart:** Building a snowman, sledding, and other outdoor activities can be sweaty work, so be sure to wear appropriate clothing.

***Ice skating, sledding, and skiing:** Outdoor activities with unfamiliar sports equipment may lead to broken bones, pulled muscles, bumps, and bruises.

***Cooking:** Avoid food poisoning by thoroughly cooking the turkey and other food.

***Eating:** Avoid heartburn and upset stomach by not overeating. Also, too much abstinence can lead to depression and in turn, overeating, so allow yourself to enjoy holiday treats in moderation.

December Fun Facts...

December is the twelfth and last month of the year in the Gregorian calendar and one of seven Gregorian months with the length of 31 days. In Latin, *decem* means "ten". December was also the tenth month in the Roman calendar until a monthless winter period was divided between January and February. December's flower is the narcissus or holly. December's birthstones are turquoise, lapis lazuli, zircon, topaz (blue), or tanzanite. December is the month with the shortest daylight hours of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and the longest daylight hours of the year in the Southern Hemisphere. December starts on the same day of the week as September.

Important December Events...

- World AIDS Day- December 1
- AFL-CIO Day- December 5
- National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day- Dec. 7
- Human Rights Day- December 7
- Islamic New Year- December 18
- Christmas Day- December 25
- Boxing Day (Canada)- December 26
- National Chocolate Day- December 28, 29
- New Year's Eve- December 31
- Human Rights Week- December 10-17
- Hanukkah- December 12-19
- Kwanzaa- December 26- January 1
- World AIDS Month
- National Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month
- Spiritual Literacy Month
- Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Farewell!

DLLR and The Office of Fair Practices would like to wish long time employee Olabisi James a happy retirement. Olabisi has worked tirelessly for the past 27 years in the Central Processing unit. Olabisi brought a warm and loving attitude to work with her everyday and often went above and beyond the call of duty to get the job done. She took the time every month to decorate the Eutaw Street lobby for different cultural observances and celebrations; she also was a member of the Diversity Council. Once again we would like to wish Olabisi a wonderful retirement!



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Enjoy the holiday parties, but please don't Drink and Drive!



Driving after drinking alcohol or using illicit drugs is a serious concern, especially around the holiday season, when many people attend parties where alcohol and drugs may be readily available.

The only way to guarantee that you are driving safely is to avoid alcohol and illicit drugs completely. Even one drink can slow reflexes and make you sluggish as it alters your blood alcohol concentration. Every day, 36 people in the United States die, and approximately 700 more are injured, in motor vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver.

This December, during National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month (3D Month), consider what you and your community can do to make injuries and deaths from impaired driving less of a threat.

The Problem

- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), about three in every ten Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some point in their lives.
- In 2006, 13,470 people died in alcohol-impaired driving crashes, accounting for nearly one-third (32%) of all traffic-related deaths in the United States.
- In one year, over 1.4 million drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. This accounts for less than 1% of the 159 million self-reported episodes of alcohol-impaired driving among U.S. adults each year.
- Alcohol-related crashes in the United States cost about \$51 billion a year.

Protect Yourself and Your Family and Friends

During the holiday season, and year-round, take steps to make sure that you and everyone you celebrate with avoids driving under the influence of alcohol. Following these tips from NHTSA can help you stay safe:

- Plan ahead. Always designate a non-drinking driver before any holiday party or celebration begins.
- Take the keys. Do not let a friend drive if they are impaired.
- Be a helpful host. If you're hosting a party this holiday season, remind your guests to plan ahead and designate their sober driver, always offer alcohol-free beverages, and make sure all of your guests leave with a sober driver.