

## Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Corner

### This Month's Happenings: March 2023

#### Women's History Month

[Women's History Month](#) is celebrated throughout the month of March to honor women's contributions to American history. Beginning in 1978 as a local celebration in Santa Rosa, California, the festivities spread across the country as other communities started their own celebrations. In 1980, various women's groups and historians, led by the [National Women's History Project](#), successfully lobbied for recognition on a national scale with President Jimmy Carter issuing the first Presidential Proclamation declaring National Women's History Week. In 1987, Congress passed a law expanding the week into a month, designating March as Women's History Month.



#### Purim 3/7

[Purim](#), or the Feast of Lots, is a Jewish festival commemorating the survival of the Jewish people who were marked for death by their Persian rulers in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, as portrayed in the biblical [Book of Esther](#). This holiday is regarded as one of the most beloved Jewish communal celebrations, with participants partaking by reading from the Book of Esther, sharing a festive meal, distributing packages of food and other small treats offered to friends and family, and giving gifts to the poor.

#### Holi 3/8

[Holi](#) is a [Hindu](#) spring festival celebrated throughout India on the full-moon day of Phalgun, the twelfth month of India's national civil calendar. This joyous holiday is celebrated with participants throwing colored water and powder on one another, with no consideration of caste, gender, status, or age. The day is sometimes referred to as the "festival of love," as on this day people get to unite and forget all resentments. The ritual starts by lighting a bonfire one day before Holi, symbolizing the triumph of good over bad. Once the colorful celebrating is complete, participants show love and respect to those closest to them: friends, family, and teachers.





### St. Patrick's Day 3/17

[St. Patrick's Day](#) is the feast day of [St. Patrick](#), the patron saint of Ireland. Born in Roman Britain in the late 4<sup>th</sup> century, he was kidnapped and taken to Ireland as a slave when he was 16. Once escaped, he returned in 432 to convert Ireland to Christianity. For the next thirty years until his death on March 17, 461, he worked establishing monasteries, churches, and schools. The celebration of St. Patrick's Day didn't start until 1631, when the Catholic Church established a Feast Day honoring St. Patrick. Traditions as we know them today started even later in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with emigrants transforming the day of religious service and feast into a secular holiday of partying and celebration of all things Irish.

### Ramadan 3/22 - 4/21

Celebrated during the ninth month of the Muslim lunar year, [Ramadan](#) is a holy month of fasting, introspection, and prayer for followers of [Islam](#). Beyond daily fasting from dawn to sunset, the month also encourages Muslims to question the basis and foundations of Islamic spiritual practice, using the time for solidarity and sharing. The end of Ramadan is celebrated with [Eid al-Fitr](#), the "Feast of Fast-Breaking." This is one of the two major religious holidays on the Muslim calendar; it is celebrated in some communities with new clothes, special pastries, gifts, and gathering of family and friends to pray together in the mosque.

