



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Calendar December - 2023

Month-Long Observances:

Universal Human Rights Month: Universal Human Rights Month, celebrated in December, honors the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948, by the UN General Assembly. This month serves as a time to acknowledge and promote the rights and freedoms inherent to all individuals regardless of their background. Through various global initiatives, discussions, and events, the month highlights the importance of upholding human rights, advocates for justice and equality, and raises awareness about ongoing challenges. It's a time for reflection, reaffirmation of commitments, and collective efforts towards safeguarding the dignity and liberties of every person worldwide.

HIV/AIDS Awareness Month: HIV/AIDS Awareness Month, observed in December, is dedicated to raising awareness, educating communities, and reducing stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS. It serves as a time to promote prevention, support those affected, honor lives lost, and emphasize the importance of testing and early detection in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Day Observances:

December 1st World AID Day: World AIDS Day, observed on December 1st each year, serves as a global reminder of the ongoing fight against HIV/AIDS. It's a day dedicated to raising awareness, supporting those affected, commemorating lives lost, and advocating for continued efforts in prevention, education, and treatment.

December 2nd The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery: The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, marked on December 2nd, commemorates the efforts to eradicate all forms of slavery worldwide. It underscores the need for continued action to combat modern-day slavery, promote human rights, and raise awareness about the persistence of this heinous practice, emphasizing the importance of freedom and dignity for all.

December 3rd The International Day of Persons with a Disability: The International Day of Persons with Disabilities, observed on December 3rd, aims to promote understanding and support for the rights, dignity, and well-being of people with disabilities worldwide. It serves as a platform to raise awareness, celebrate their contributions, and advocate for inclusive societies that value and accommodate the diverse needs of all individuals.



December 5th International Volunteer Day: International Volunteer Day, celebrated on December 5th, acknowledges and applauds the contributions of volunteers worldwide. It's a day dedicated to honoring their selfless efforts, promoting volunteerism, and recognizing the positive impact volunteers make in addressing global challenges, supporting communities, and fostering social change.

December 6th St. Nicholas Day (Christian): St. Nicholas Day, observed on December 6th in various parts of the world, commemorates the life and legacy of Saint Nicholas, a Christian saint known for his compassion and generosity. It is a day when many cultures and traditions celebrate by exchanging gifts, particularly among children, honoring the spirit of kindness and charity associated with Saint Nicholas. In some countries, this day involves customs like leaving shoes out to be filled with treats or small gifts, symbolizing the spirit of giving and goodwill.

December 7th—15th Hanukkah (Jewish): Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a cherished Jewish holiday that will commence on the evening of December 7th and last for eight days until December 15th in 2023. This celebration commemorates the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and the miraculous burning of oil for eight days. Families observe this joyous occasion by lighting the menorah, adding a candle each night, enjoying traditional foods such as latkes and sufganiyot (jelly doughnuts), playing games like dreidel, and exchanging gifts. Hanukkah embodies themes of resilience, hope, and the triumph of light over darkness in Jewish tradition.

December 8th Bodhi Day (Buddhist): Bodhi Day, celebrated on December 8th, commemorates the enlightenment of Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha. It marks the day when, after years of meditation, he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. Buddhists around the world observe this day with meditation, chanting, and acts of kindness. It's a time for reflection on the Buddha's teachings of compassion, mindfulness, and the path to enlightenment.

December 9th International Genocide Prevention Day: International Genocide Prevention Day, observed on December 9th, serves as a global reminder of the importance of preventing genocide and atrocities worldwide. It aims to raise awareness, promote education, and advocate for actions that halt the occurrence and recurrence of genocide by addressing its root causes and fostering a culture of peace, tolerance, and respect for human rights.

December 10th International Human Rights Day: International Human Rights Day, recognized on December 10th, honors the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It's a day to advocate for the protection and promotion of human rights globally, fostering equality, justice, and dignity for all individuals.

December 12th Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Mexico): The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, celebrated on December 12th, commemorates the appearance of the Virgin Mary to Juan Diego, an indigenous Mexican, in 1531. It's a significant religious holiday in Mexico and for many Catholics worldwide. The day includes religious services, processions, and festivities honoring the Virgin of Guadalupe, considered a symbol of hope, compassion, and unity.

December 16th – 24th Las Posadas (Mexico): Las Posadas is a traditional Mexican celebration observed from December 16th to 24th, reenacting Mary and Joseph's journey seeking shelter in Bethlehem. Participants, often in neighborhoods or communities, go door-to-door singing songs, asking for lodging ("posada"), symbolizing the couple's quest. Each night represents a stop on their journey, culminating on Christmas Eve with a final gathering, prayers, traditional foods, and breaking piñatas, fostering a sense of community and solidarity during the holiday season.

December 18th International Migrants Day: Observed on December 18th, serves to recognize and raise awareness about the contributions, challenges, and rights of migrants worldwide. It commemorates the adoption of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families by the United Nations. This day highlights the need for respecting migrant rights, promoting inclusivity, and acknowledging the positive impact migrants have on societies globally.

December 21st Yule Winter Solstice (Wicca): Yule, celebrated on the winter solstice around December 21st in the Northern Hemisphere, is a pagan festival marking the rebirth of the sun and the eventual return of longer days. It honors nature, light, and the turning of the seasons. Traditional Yule customs include lighting candles, decorating evergreen trees, feasting, and exchanging gifts. Pagans and Wiccans observe this day with rituals that symbolize hope, renewal, and the cycle of life.

December 21st Dongzhi Festival: The Dongzhi Festival, observed in East Asia, particularly in China, on or around December 21st, celebrates the winter solstice. This festival holds cultural significance, signifying the arrival of winter and the year's shortest daylight period. Families gather to enjoy special foods like tangyuan (sweet rice balls) and hearty meals, emphasizing the importance of unity and the passing of the seasons. Dongzhi embodies themes of reunion, gratitude, and the sharing of warmth and blessings with loved ones.

December 24th—25th Christmas Eve & Christmas Day (Christian): Christmas Eve, observed on December 24th, marks the anticipation and excitement preceding Christmas Day. Families and friends gather for festive traditions, including attending church services, exchanging gifts, sharing meals, and partaking in various customs like decorating Christmas trees and singing carols. The evening holds a sense of warmth and togetherness, fostering cherished moments and creating a joyful atmosphere filled with anticipation for the upcoming day.

Christmas Day, celebrated on December 25th, is a time of jubilation, commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ for Christians worldwide. Families unite to exchange presents, share elaborate meals, and engage in traditions passed down through generations. It's a day of merriment, marked by joyous gatherings, acts of generosity, and expressions of love and goodwill towards one another, embodying the spirit of giving and fostering a sense of peace and unity among communities.

December 26th Boxing Day: Boxing Day, observed on December 26th, is a traditional holiday celebrated in various countries, primarily in the United Kingdom and former British colonies. It originated as a day for giving gifts or "boxes" to service workers, but it has evolved into a day known for shopping sales, sports events like football matches, charitable activities, and social gatherings. It's a time for relaxation, enjoying leftover holiday feasts, and engaging in leisure activities after the hustle and bustle of Christmas.

December 26th—January 1st Kwanza: Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration honoring African heritage and culture. Observed from December 26th to January 1st, it was created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga. Each day focuses on one of seven principles known as the Nguzo Saba, including unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. Celebrants light candles on a kinara, exchange symbolic gifts, perform traditional dances, and engage in discussions centered on these principles, fostering unity, reflection, and community among African diaspora.

December 31st New Years Eve: New Year's Eve, celebrated on December 31st, marks the final day of the year. It's a time for joyous gatherings, parties, and countdowns leading to the stroke of midnight, symbolizing the transition into the upcoming year. Revelers often engage in fireworks, music, and various festivities while reflecting on the past year's experiences and setting intentions for the year ahead.