



# THE BRIEN CENTER

Diversity • Equity • Inclusion • Belonging

Your courage, our care.

## NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023

### UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH

In 1948 the United Nations crafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The very first article states: *All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.* The document goes on to define what human rights should be respected and protected universally, as well as emphasizing how important it is to do so.

Universal Human Rights Month is about acknowledging that people of different cultures and creeds are still people. We must be careful of differentiating ourselves from our fellow humans so much that we forget this core truth. Take the time to learn about another culture that is different from yours. If that culture makes you nervous, so much the better. By learning about other people and standing up for their rights you encourage equality, justice, and freedom.



### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons was proclaimed in 1992, by the United Nations General Assembly. The observance of the Day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life.

In recognition of Persons With Disabilities Day, the DEIB Committee would like to highlight several notable celebrants. Please click on the image below to view our celebrant video.



### INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE HIGHLIGHT OF THE MONTH

Most persons with disabilities are comfortable with the words used in daily life. You can say “let’s go for a walk” to a person who uses a wheelchair. However, phrases such as “blind as a bat” or “deaf as a post” should be avoided. You should also be careful with other metaphors like “blind to criticism” and “to fall on deaf ears”. Misused terminology can be inappropriate and hurtful. Avoid the use of disability-related terms to express criticism. For example, do not use the word “lame” to express when something or someone is “boring” or “uncool”.

### ABLEISM

Ableism is a set of beliefs or practices that devalue and discriminate against people with physical, intellectual, or psychiatric disabilities and often rests on the assumption that disabled people need to be 'fixed' in one form or the other. A key step to avoiding ableism in our own behaviors is to recognize that people with disabilities are, in fact, people. They are equal to nondisabled people in every way, and worthy of the same respect.

Questions/Comments/Suggestions for the DEI Committee?

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