

every voice



Spring 2019

Volume 1.

Monthly Spotlight: Pride

COMMITTEE UPDATE

By Abraham Leon, BA - Care Coordinator

June is Pride month in the LGBTQ community, not only nationally but in many other countries where they can safely do so. I happen to have been born in June, but can't say it's felt like a party and at times wondered why it was upstaged. I first learned about Pride in my mid to late teens, and didn't understand what there was to be "proud" of or why/what we were celebrating. Over the years, I have continued learning about what a pivotal moment in time The Stonewall uprising (1969) was and how it became a catalyst for human rights in LGBTQ community. I learned to view Pride a remembrance of how brave the Trans, drag queens, and men were. They had everything to lose, but still stood up and resisted the mistreatment they had endured and who for many continued. Pride Month has become an opportunity to demonstrate the wide spectrum that exists not only within the LGBTQ community, and I'd argue among humanity. It serves as an opportunity to highlight what makes us all so different, but that we can all come together for a greater cause, Equality. I find this awareness has helped me along my career and the ongoing work within the Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Committee. I'll leave a few links to allow for many to learn more.



The Family Continuity Diversity Committee was formed in 2017 to enhance and encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion within the Agency. This is realized through training, agency policies and communications, recruitment/retention, community engagement, and data collection. You may have met some of us as we made our circuit from site to site sharing a short presentation on cultural responsiveness. As many of you know, the Agency is currently involved in Strategic Planning, a process that our Committee is playing a key role in to ensure that our future is built on a foundation of diversity, equity, and inclusion. One outcome of this work, along with feedback from you all, is to publish this newsletter to keep the conversation going and connect the agency to current, information that is critical for us to live our mission as a Committee and agency. If you are interested in learning more about the Committee, or joining, contact any of our members:

About Pride Month: <https://www.loc.gov/lgbt-pride-month/about/>

About Stonewall Uprising (Riots):
<https://www.history.com/topics/gay-rights/the-stonewall-riots>

When Homosexuality was Removed from List of Mental Illness:
<https://www.hrc.org/blog/flashbackfriday-today-in-1973-the-apa-removed-homosexuality-from-list-of-me>

Stephanie Almonte, Lawrence
Henry de Lima, Lawrence
Harmony Evans, Worcester
Indira Gumbe, Worcester/Peabody
Virginie Kamuene, Lawrence
Abraham Leon, Worcester/Peabody
Roshan Mahato, Worcester
Juan Matos, Lawrence
April Middleton, Worcester
Grant Pike, Hyannis
Tori Rosati, Lawrence/Peabody

Safety Tip – Henry de Lima, LICSW - Clinician

Cultural safety, is fostering an environment which is safe for people; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. Practicing cultural safety means empowering clients to participate in a supportive and safe space; and engaging clients in interventions which are sensitive to their cultural traditions.

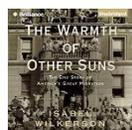
How Diverse Is Your World?

By Stephanie Almonte, LICSW - Clinician

I recall watching a scene in the movie "Hidden Figures" where one of the characters, a gifted NASA technician named Dorothy, goes to the library to borrow a book to help her prepare for added responsibilities at work. She was told she would have to leave the library because it was for "whites only", and even though the library for "colored people" didn't have that book, she still couldn't borrow it. (Spoiler alert!) Dorothy ends up taking the book anyway and teaching herself a new computer code that would eventually serve as a catalyst for one of the greatest operations in history: NASA's launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit. I left the theater thinking about all the other "hidden figures" out there - Black pioneers who overcame nearly impossible economic, social and political barriers to achieve their dreams, built a better future for the next generation and yet, their stories remain untold.

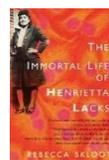
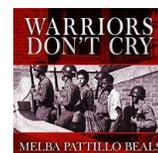


Black history is American history and when these stories go untold, we miss out on a critical part of our collective history. One way to deepen the diversity of your world is to read books by authors from different cultures and life experiences from your own to empathize and understand other perspectives. This creates a more inclusive and equitable world. In honor of the many "hidden figures" in our society, here's a list of recommended reading to learn more about the black experience in America.



The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration by Isabel Wilkerson

Warriors Don't Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock's Central High by Melba Pattillo Beals



The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

What's the Difference?

Diversity

Refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, geographic region, and more.

Equity

The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for consumers and employees, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of marginalized groups

Inclusion

The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued. An inclusive climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions so that people can fully participate comfortably in the receiving services or working in the organization.

Adapted from: Division of Equity and Inclusion, University of California, Berkeley
Modified by: Cassandra Clay, MSW, LICSW, M.Ed.



Staff Spotlight

Congratulations to Cultural Broker staff member, **Richard Makokha!** Last week, the International Institute of Immigrants in Lowell honored Richard for being **Welcome & Inclusion Leader**. So proud of Richard and all our Cultural Broker staff for what they do on behalf of our refugee and immigrant communities every day!