

# Belonging

the newsletter from the *FIRST* NC ED&I Team – February 2023

**Equity** – Treating everyone fairly, having equal opportunities and removing barriers

**Diversity** – The way we are all different

**Inclusion** – Creating space for everyone where differences are embraced

## Team Activities for Diversity and Inclusion: “Categories”

There is comfort in knowing that we share something in common with people we meet for the first time. This activity is highly rated in the context of team building and acts as a fun icebreaker.

Start by asking a series of simple two-group splits such as which arm sits on top when you cross your arms on your chest, to whether you like board games or computer games best, to whether you like the beach or the ocean best. Build up trust to being able to make to more dynamic and multi-group splits such as how often you feel like you’re in a minority in a group, or the level of comfort you feel when you appear to be in the minority.

Enjoy seeing how much people have in common and see if the trust level can be high enough to explore more challenging realities of diversity and inclusion.

Do you have tips for other teams on how to include people and help them feel they belong?

Send them to [FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com](mailto:FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com) and we’ll include them in upcoming newsletters.

## From *FIRST*: Just in case you missed it! - Free STEM Kahoot! Activities

Join us in celebrating science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) with free activities. This month we learn about:

- [FIRST Core Values](#)
- [STEM Ethics with FIRST](#)
- [FIRST Team Project Management](#)
- [FIRST History](#)

## February Events:

*February is Black History Month in the United States and Canada. Carter G. Woodson started the tradition with the creation of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. In 1926, Negro History Week was established. Since 1976, the month has been federally designated to remember the contributions of people of the African diaspora.*

**February 1:** *National Freedom Day, honoring the signing by Abraham Lincoln of a resolution that later became the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that abolished slavery.*

**February 5:** *Vasant Panchami is the Hindu festival that highlights the coming of spring.*

**February 14:** *St. Valentine’s Day is a Western Christian feast day honoring one or two early saints named Valentinus.*

**February 15:** *Parinirvana Day, or Nirvana Day, is the commemoration of Buddha’s death at the age of 80.*

**February 17:** *Lailat al Miraj, a Muslim holiday commemorating Muhammad’s journey from Mecca to Jerusalem.*

**February 18:** *Maha Shivaratri, a Hindu festival celebrated to honor Lord Shiva and the arrival of spring.*

**February 20:** *Presidents Day honors the birthdays of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and every US president.*

**February 21:** *Mardi Gras, the last day for Catholics to indulge before Ash Wednesday.*

**February 22:** *Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent on the Christian calendar.*

**February 25 to March 1:** *Intercalary Days, or Ayyám-i-Há, is celebrated by people of the Bahá’í faith.*

**February 26:** *Meatfare Sunday is traditionally the last day of eating meat before Easter for Orthodox Christians.*

**February 27:** *Also known as Clean Monday, this is the beginning of Great Lent in the Orthodox Christian faith.*

## Inspiration & Recognition Spotlight: *FIRST* Alum – DeAnna Kinds - Bachelor of Science (BS), Business Administration and Management



*While DeAnna’s home life in Chicago’s South Side was going through turmoil, she struggled to stay engaged in school – until *FIRST* gave her an environment and mentorship that helped her stay connected and find purpose. She joined a *FIRST* Tech Challenge team led by team mentor Bruce, a retiree who wanted to help kids achieve a bright future and stay engaged himself. Through Bruce’s encouragement and support, DeAnna graduated, went to college, and landed her dream job, and now the *FIRST* alum helps younger members of her family find their own paths forward.*

Learn more: <https://www.firstinspires.org/stories/how-i-found-my-path-forward>

## Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Youth Training:

The Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (ED&I) Youth Training is for all *FIRST* students. It is designed to educate *FIRST* students about the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion while providing strategies and recommendations to help *FIRST* create a more inclusive and diverse environment.

- [Module 1 – What are Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion?](#)

## The *FIRST* NC ED&I Team: Contact us at: [FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com](mailto:FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com)

We are a team of coaches/mentors who want to help create a community and culture of people who embrace the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion, who want to develop themselves, and who understand that growth and diversity of all types lead to team excellence.

*Anisha Patel - The Pitt Pirates 2642*  
*Dave Lashley (he/him) - Team SPORK 3196*

*Linda Whipker (she/her) - Team PyroTech 3459*  
*Melissa “Bee” Bube (they/she) - Girls on Fire 5679*

All Editions are Available Online at: <https://www.firstnorthcarolina.org/belonging-newsletter>