

Belonging

the newsletter from the *FIRST* NC ED&I Team – May 2024

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.

What Does It Mean to Belong?

This article from ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development) explores what it means to belong.

Students with a strong sense of belonging in school perform better academically; conversely, when students don't feel that they belong, their learning suffers. And the impact of belonging extends beyond academics: it impacts well-being. According to research, students who report a higher degree of school belonging experience better mental health and are at lower risk of suicidal ideation or attempts.

But what does it mean to belong? Stanford researcher Geoffrey Cohen (2022) proposes the following definition:

“Belonging is the feeling that we’re part of a larger group that values, respects, and cares for us—and to which we feel we have something to contribute.”

There are several important aspects of this definition:

- Belonging is a feeling—in other words, we know it when we experience it.
- Belonging involves a larger group that exhibits certain behaviors toward us. We feel valued, respected, and cared for by that group.
- And belonging includes a feeling that we have something of worth to contribute to that group.

Read more at - <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/what-does-it-mean-to-belong>

How do you and your team make members, coaches and mentors feel they belong? Do you have tips for other teams on how to include people and help them feel they really belong?

Send them to FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com or use this [GOOGLE FORM](#) and we'll include them in upcoming newsletters.

From *FIRST*: Just in case you missed it! – 2024 FIRST Championship Impact Award Winners – Team 2486 CocoNuts

Team 2486 “CocoNuts” is creating change in Arizona by starting rural *FIRST*® teams in and around their Flagstaff community, which is home to a population of white, Indigenous, and Hispanic/Latinx students, and inspiring students’ STEM interest in communities lacking access to in-depth programs through traditional school curriculum.

Read Team 2486 CocoNuts Impact Award Essay [HERE](#) and watch their Impact Award Video [HERE](#)

May Holidays and Events:

**** Sincere apologies for getting recent Jewish holiday dates wrong. Thank you, Neon Krakens, for helping us get it right from now on***

– If you spot an error in the newsletter please email us at: FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com *

May Holidays and Events (continued):

May is [Mental Health Awareness Month](#), also known as *Mental Health Month*. Its aim is to raise awareness and educate the public about mental illnesses and reduce the stigma that surrounds mental illnesses.

May is also [Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month](#), [ALS Awareness Month](#), [National Arthritis Awareness Month](#), [National Foster Care Month](#), and [Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month](#)

May 1: Beltane is an ancient Celtic, Pagan, and Wiccan holiday celebrated about halfway between the spring equinox and summer solstice. The day is often used to celebrate love and romance.

May 1: International Workers' Day (Labor Day) - Celebrates the achievements and contributions of workers worldwide.

May 1: National Interpreter Appreciation Day - Recognizes and honors interpreters, and their role in helping people communicate across different languages and modes, such as sign language.

May 5: Cinco de Mayo - Commemorates the Mexican Army's victory over the French Empire at the Battle of Puebla in 1862. Celebrated primarily in Mexico and the United States.

May 7: World Asthma Day - Recognized the first Tuesday of May, World Asthma Day is intended to raise awareness of asthma internationally, and provide asthma education opportunities.

May 8: World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day - Recognizes the work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in providing humanitarian aid and support worldwide.

May 12: International Nurses Day - Celebrates the contributions and sacrifices of nurses around the world and commemorates the birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing.

May 12: Mother's Day - in the United States, Canada, Australia, and several other countries, Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday in May (in the United Kingdom, Mother's day is held on the fourth Sunday of Lent, which was March 10; in Mexico, Mother's day is on **May 10** of every year).

May 15: International Day of Families - Promotes awareness of issues relating to families and highlights their importance in nurturing and supporting individuals and communities.

May 17: International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (IDAHOTB) - Raises awareness about discrimination and violence against LGBTQ+ individuals and promotes inclusion and acceptance.

May 21: World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development - Recognizes the importance of cultural diversity in promoting dialogue, understanding, and sustainable development.

May 22: International Day for Biological Diversity - Raises awareness about biodiversity issues and highlights the importance of conserving and protecting Earth's ecosystems.

May 25 (nightfall) – 26 (nightfall): Lag BaOmer - A festive day on the Jewish calendar, celebrating the anniversary of the passing of the great sage and mystic Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, author of the Zohar.

May 25: Africa Day (formerly African Freedom Day and African Liberation Day) - Commemorates the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, which later became the African Union (AU).

May 27: Memorial Day in the United States is a federal holiday established to honor military veterans.

May 29: International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers - Honors the men and women who have served and continue to serve in UN peacekeeping operations and pays tribute to those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.

May 31: World No Tobacco Day - Raises awareness about the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocates for effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption.

Inspiration & Recognition Spotlight: #PeopleofSTEAM: Meet Sarah



Sarah is a Senior Product Manager at FIRST® Strategic Partner John Deere working on the autonomous tractor. As a FIRST alum of all three programs, she enjoys working with John Deere teams from different areas such as marketing and engineering and finds the collaboration very similar to her experience in FIRST. Sarah also uses her FIRST and STEAM skills such as CAD, geometry, and software everyday as she works on the perception system of the autonomous tractor, which makes sure that the tractor detects and stops for obstacles in the field.

Read more about Sarah's journey with STEAM!: [#PeopleofSTEAM: Meet Sarah](#)

Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Training: *From the UCLA Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion*

This is lesson 1 in the Implicit Bias Video Series from BruinX, the R&D unit within UCLA's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

This video discusses schemas, which are mental short-cuts that help us navigate the world around us.

Click here to view: [Implicit Bias | Lesson 1: Schemas](#)

The *FIRST* NC ED&I Team: Contact us at: 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 (she/her) - 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>