

# Diversity Matters

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## ASIAN ~ PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The National designation of May as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month was signed into law in 1992 by then President of the United States, George H.W. Bush. Annually, the current President issues a proclamation continuing this designation. Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is to celebrate the history, culture, and traditions of Asian and Pacific Islanders in the United States. The month of May was chosen as the commemorative month for this celebration due to two specific events: (1) the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and (2) the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869, which was primarily laid by Chinese immigrants.

In celebration of Asian-Pacific Heritage Month, check out the OED website's monthly events page where "A Village Called Versailles" can be viewed.

To find out more about Asian-Pacific Heritage Month, go to: [www.asianpacificheritage.gov](http://www.asianpacificheritage.gov), <https://caamedia.org/about-caam/>, or <http://smithsonianapa.org/project/life2014>.

## national WOMEN'S HEALTH week May 11-17, 2014

National Women's Health Week is a week-long health observance coordinated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health with the goal of empowering women to make

their health a priority. This week is meant to bring together communities, businesses, government, health organizations, and other groups in an effort to promote women's health. As we celebrate Women's Health, it is encouraged that women take the following steps to improve their physical and mental health and lower their risks of certain diseases.:

1. Visit a health care professional to receive regular checkups and preventive screenings.
2. Get active.
3. Eat healthy.
4. Pay attention to mental health, including getting enough sleep and managing stress.
5. Avoid unhealthy behaviors, such as smoking, not wearing a seatbelt or bicycle helmet, and texting while driving.



For more information, visit: <http://womenshealth.gov/nwhs/>

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# BREAKING NEWS!!

The Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) would like to welcome *THREE* new additions to our department!



First, we welcome **Kristan Tucker** as the new **Senior Equity Compliance Specialist** at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC). Kristan is a native Texan. She holds a B.A. in Speech Communication from West Texas A&M University and a M.S. in Communication Studies from the University of North Texas. In addition, Kristan holds a J.D. from Liberty University School of Law and is licensed to practice law in the State of Tennessee.

Within the OED, Kristan's duties primarily include gathering information on internal discrimination claims, conducting investigations, negotiation of corrective action settlements, and developing and preparing narrative reports. She also provides direction and training to members of the University community in accordance with anti-discrimination laws and hiring policies and procedures to minimize the University's legal liability concerning: harassment, discrimination, retaliation, sexual assault prevention, affirmative action, Title VI, Title VII, and Title IX.

Second, we welcome **Travis Liggins** to our department as the new **Tennessee Institute for Pre-Professionals (TIP) Program Coordinator** at the UTHSC. A native of Memphis, Tennessee, Travis is a graduate of Overton High School. He is an alumnus of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville with a B.A. degree in Psychology, and THE Ohio State with a M.A. degree in Educational Leadership and Policy.

As a Coordinator within the OED, Travis works to recruit and develop pre-health students from underserved communities aiming to enter professional healthcare careers. This includes, but not limited to, providing internships, counseling, skills development workshops, and school examination test-preparation. Additionally, Travis splits his time with Student Academic Support Services as an Educational Specialist.



Finally, we welcome **Ashleigh Brock** as the new **Diversity Management Specialist** at UTHSC. A native of Nashville, Tennessee, Ashleigh is a graduate of Hampton University where she received a B.A. in History with a minor in Political Science. She also received a J.D. from the University of Tennessee College of Law at Knoxville.

Within the OED, Ashleigh's duties principally include supporting the development and implementation of programs and practices that encourage diversity awareness, skill building, and institutional compliance with ADA, Section 504, and Title IX. In addition, Ashleigh assists in ensuring compliance with the University's Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity programs, federal and state laws, and institutional policies and procedures through interpretation, analysis, and advice.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Memphis *Greek* Festival



The 56th Annual Memphis Greek Festival is May 9 & 10 at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church. The festival will feature a Grecian Feast of everything from Lamb Kabobs and Gyros to Spanakopita and Baklava (just to name a few). There will also be a variety of Greek wines.

Entertainment will include the musical styling's of Kostas Kastan is and his band as well as performances by the Athenian Dance Troupe. There will be a Greek Agora Marketplace where you can browse jewelry, Greek clothing, statues, olive oil, and much more. Church tours will also be available.

For more information, visit: [www.memphisingreekfestival.com](http://www.memphisingreekfestival.com)

### Memphis *Italian* Festival: A taste of Italy in the South!

The 25th Annual Memphis Italian Festival will be held in Marquette Park May 29-31. The event includes a 5K race, Bocce ball tournament, team cooking competition, and volleyball tournament. Italian and American food concessions will be available as well as musical acts, grape stomping, arts, and crafts. The purpose of the festival is to demonstrate the values of family, faith, and fellowship in the Italian-American tradition by providing Memphians a family-friendly festival.

For more information, visit: [www.memphisitalianfestival.com](http://www.memphisitalianfestival.com)



### Memphis in May International Festival

The Memphis in May International Festival is a month-long festival celebrating international and Memphis culture. It features a variety of events like the Beale Street Music Festival, the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, and Sunset Symphony as well as producing education, international, and economic programs for the city. This event is meant to foster civic pride, promote awareness of Memphis heritage, and build international relationships.

Each year, a country is chosen for celebration. This year, the honored country is Panama. Programming will include art exhibits around the city, a Panamanian film screening, musical performances, speakers and lectures, as well as a salute to Panama cuisine.

The Memphis in May International Festival events include:

- Beale Street Music Festival (May 2-4)
- International Salute to Panama (May 5-11)
- World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest (May 15-17)
- AutoZone Sunset Symphony (May 24)
- International Education Program (All month long)

For more information, visit: [www.memphisinmay.org](http://www.memphisinmay.org)

### Faith in Memphis

For more information about faith in our community, visit: [www.faithinmemphis.com](http://www.faithinmemphis.com)

## GOLDEN TICKET

*15% DISCOUNT*

The Germantown Performance Arts Center (GPAC) is offering a 15% discount to UTHSC students, faculty, staff, residents, and postdocs by using a special code created for UTHSC, when purchasing tickets online ([www.gpacweb.com](http://www.gpacweb.com)) or when calling the box office at 901-751-7500. **UTHSC's promotional code is UT15.** GPAC has some exciting programming throughout the season that should encourage a pluralistic view because music, art, and drama enable access to everyone.

## NOTES FROM THE ASSISTANT VICE-CHANCELLOR AND DIRECTOR



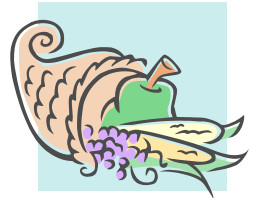
### Diversity in Taste and Diet

It is probably safe to posit that some workplaces are more diverse in light of the demographic changes of the workforce throughout the United States coupled with how organizations now pursue diversity as a business case. Organizations that pursue diversity often demonstrate a competitive advantage in employee performance and productivity because well-managed diverse teams tend to have better performance outcomes than homogeneous teams. In celebrating the positive performance and productivity outcomes attributed to well-managed, diverse employee teams, some organizations do so with food and drink. In some instances, these organized celebrations with food and drink are daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly, taking place in the workplace or away from the workplace.

What is actually being celebrated, informally or formally, will vary across different organization types, within departments, and between departments. Moreover, you will find that some organizations do not adequately address providing the appropriate food and drink to its employees to acknowledge differences. Knowing and understanding the food and eating habits of the employees being lauded is essential to the planning of any inclusive organizational celebration. This encompasses the different types of food, when an employee eats, and the presence of an employee's chosen eating restrictions. When choosing the menu for the event, program, or luncheon, consideration should always be given to Halal or Kosher dietary restrictions, vegetarianism, veganism, diabetes, and lactose intolerance. If surveyed, race and ethnicity differences across the organization will likely highlight variance in dietary needs and preferences (Hastings, 2006). Some organizations are limited in what may be offered because the food is prepared internally through a contracted vendor or a local external caterer with limited knowledge of what to prepare or how to prepare the specific foods.

To elaborate further on the types of food, Halal or Kosher food describe what is "fit and proper" to eat for two groups of people, Jews and Muslims. Both of these food laws, Kosher and Halal, have their roots in scripture, The Holy Bible and Torah for Kosher and The Quran for Halal. This does not mean nor is it implied that Kosher and Halal are the same.

An employee might be eating a specific way based on his/her observance of a religious belief. A specific example is fasting as it relates to no consumption of food and drink from dawn until sunset or not partaking in food and drink for an entire day, half of a day, or month. Some organizations have inadvertently scheduled celebrations with food and drink as a back-drop such as during Ramadan, Yom Kippur, and Lent. An awareness of religious holidays could prove helpful with planning celebrations to acknowledge performance and productivity outcomes.



There is also a need to focus on having vegetarian options beyond offering salads (e.g., spring mix) with options like tofu or pasta. As observed earlier, diabetes and lactose intolerance can be part of the equation as are nut and gluten allergies. If food is central to what is being celebrated, the employee also has the option to not attend or to attend and not eat. We have to acknowledge the whole employee in the workplace in light of the measurable increases realized.

According to Hastings (2006), an inclusive workplace starts with awareness of the unique needs of each employee as well as a desire to find solutions rather than barriers.

Hastings, R.R., (2006). Awareness of Dietary Needs Furthers Diversity Aims. Society For Human Resource Management.

### Grief in the Workplace

Are you a member of the Condolences Listserv? In September 2010, the Office of Equity and Diversity responded to several faculty and staff requests encouraging greater campus communication regarding the loss of a team member and the sharing of a team member's personal loss for support.



As a result, the Condolences Listserv was created and launched on September 15, 2010 for each UTHSC employee to join through a voluntary subscription process. The purpose of the Condolences Listserv is to provide UTHSC faculty and staff employees a voluntary option to subscribe to a campus-based listserv to announce the loss of a team member and/or communicate when loss occurs in a team member's immediate and extended families to include funeral arrangements and/or services.

There are some guidelines with the subscribed list that are moderated by the Office of Equity and Diversity staff. Specifically, the death of a team member, faculty or staff employee's parent or foster parent, sister, brother, spouse, child, step-child, father-in-law, mother-in-law, step-parent, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, or partner warrants communication through the Condolences Listserv by subscribers.

In conclusion, diversity is often described as incorporating similarities and differences, but for each of us, grief is a normal part of life that inevitably touches all of us. When a member of the UTHSC community is grieving the loss of a loved one, colleague or co-worker, the entire workplace feels the effect.

To subscribe to the list, interested parties should go to <http://listserv.uthsc.edu/mailman/listinfo/condolences>.

If you have additional questions, call 901-448-2112.

## TIP Starts in June!



The **Tennessee Institutes for Pre-Professionals (TIP) program** is a state-wide effort to increase the number of students from underrepresented groups in healthcare professions. The dates of the program this year are June 2, 2014 – July 18, 2014. Since TIP's inception in 1987, one thousand five hundred and nine (1,509) students have participated.

Program participants are undergraduate students who are recruited from colleges throughout Tennessee and bordering states where there are Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) with sizeable concentrations of Tennessee residents. There are three different tracks that students can participate in.

### **Track 1:**

Track I provides internship experiences where students work alongside local practitioners in the students' areas of interest. It enables students to fully understand the rigors and challenges of being a health professional. For many, it provides a framework by which students may come to (1) appreciate the stark realities of the profession, (2) reaffirm their desires to become health professionals, and (3) help them better articulate (to admissions committees) their reasons for wanting to pursue the vocation.

This year, a total of twelve (12) practitioners have signed up to mentor our Track 1 students as preceptors in their clinical environment. The practitioners include: physicians, pharmacists, nurses, and an occupational therapist. The Track I component includes regular work days of clinical shadowing as well as time devoted to academic workshops, site visits, and reflection about the internship experience.

### **Track 2:**

The Track 2 component of TIP is a standardized test preparation program, where the intent is to prepare students for the specific test required for admission to their chosen professional school. We offer preparation for the MCAT, PCAT, DAT, and GRE. This track helps students to identify any deficiencies they may have in their test taking and learning skills. The students then learn how to overcome these deficiencies, which in turn will enable them to achieve the criterion score on the entrance exam critical to professional school admission.

Members of underrepresented minority groups continue to experience difficulties associated with standardized exams. For example, the MCAT average at UTHSC for students who are accepted is a 9 or 10 in each of the three tested areas. (A perfect score in each area is 15). The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) reports that the MCAT average for African American residents of Tennessee is a 7. Track 2 is designed to help the participants increase her/his score.

### **Track 3:**

The participants of the Track III component of TIP have applied and been conditionally accepted for admission to UTHSC colleges of medicine or pharmacy, but their eventual matriculation into these colleges require that they achieve a grade of no less than a "C" in each of the courses offered in this track. Track 3 is designed to simulate the first year curriculum, allowing participants to demonstrate their ability to adjust to the rigors of professional school and understand the content.

The Track III component also includes a great deal of learning skills preparation. Formal workshops were given for such topics as goal setting/ time management, problem solving, memorization, stress management, etc., but time in the schedule also allowed students the opportunity to work individually.

Participants through all three tracks also benefit from the full support of the Student Academic Support Services staff, through regular meetings, personal and educational counseling, workshops, question groups, and assessments.

For more information about TIP, visit <https://www.uthsc.edu/HCP/>. The application for the Institute opens every year in early November, and the application deadline is in February.

## New Affirmative Action Plan Disability/Veterans Self-Identification Requirements

UTHSC is now required to seek the voluntary self-identification of individuals with a disability at least three times during pre-offer of employment and post-offer of employment in addition to all employees being invited to voluntarily to inform UTHSC whether he/she believes they have disability once every five (5) years. There is an additional requirement to inquire about the status of veterans during pre-offer and post-offer of employment. Both are federal requirements that took effect on March 24, 2014.



The electronic form can be accessed at [https://uthsc.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_8CY6Dt6qcyl9WS1](https://uthsc.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_8CY6Dt6qcyl9WS1) for pre-offer. The PDF version is available at <http://www.uthsc.edu/oed/EEOC/self-identification-form.pdf>.

If you have additional questions, please contact the Office of Equity and Diversity at 901-448-2112.

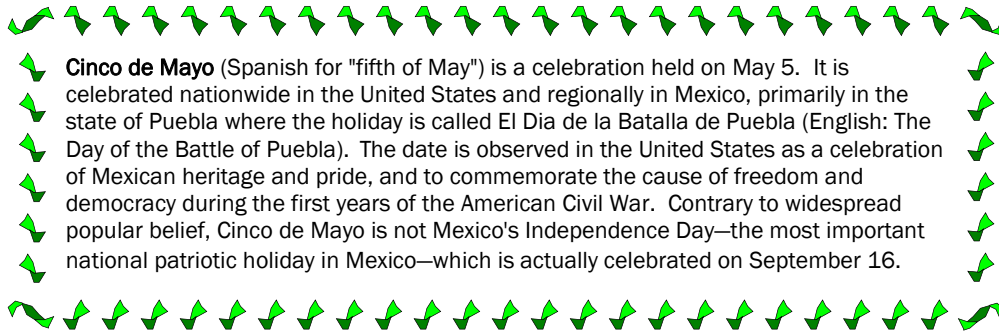
## 2014 Religious Holidays

### May

- 1 National Day of Prayer (Interfaith USA)
- 1 Beltane (Wicca)
- 2 12th Day of Rivdan (Hindu)
- 5-6 Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Jewish)
- 14 Visakha Puja-Buddha Day (Buddhist)
- 15-18 Theravadin Buddhist (New Year)  
(Theravadin Buddhist)
- 18 Lag B'Omer (Jewish)
- 22-23 Declaration of the B'ab (Baha'i)
- 27 Lailat al Miraj (Islam)
- 28-29 Ascension of Baha'u'llah (Baha'i)
- 29 Feast of the Ascension (Catholic, Christians)

### June

- 3-5 Shavuot (Jewish)
- 8 Pentecost (Christian, Orthodox Christian)
- 14 Lailat al Bara'ah (Islam)
- 15 Trinity Sunday (Christian)
- 15 All Saints (Orthodox Christian)
- 16 Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dey Sahib (Sikh)
- 19 Corpus Christi (Catholic Christian)
- 21 Solstice (Wicca/Pagan)
- 27 Sacred Heart of Jesus (Catholic Christian)
- 28 1st Day of Ramadan (Islam)



**Cinco de Mayo** (Spanish for "fifth of May") is a celebration held on May 5. It is celebrated nationwide in the United States and regionally in Mexico, primarily in the state of Puebla where the holiday is called El Dia de la Batalla de Puebla (English: The Day of the Battle of Puebla). The date is observed in the United States as a celebration of Mexican heritage and pride, and to commemorate the cause of freedom and democracy during the first years of the American Civil War. Contrary to widespread popular belief, Cinco de Mayo is not Mexico's Independence Day—the most important national patriotic holiday in Mexico—which is actually celebrated on September 16.



## Equity & Diversity Training Classes

To be determined, please contact OED for more information at 901-448-2112.



All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment and admissions without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, or covered veteran status.

Eligibility and other terms and conditions of employment benefits at The University of Tennessee are governed by laws and regulations of the State of Tennessee, and this non-discrimination statement is intended to be consistent with those laws and regulations.

In accordance with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, The University of Tennessee affirmatively states that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or disability in its education programs and activities, and this policy extends to employment by the University.

Inquiries and charges of violation of Title VI (race, color, national origin), Title IX (sex), Section 504 (disability), ADA (disability), Age Discrimination in Employment Act (age), sexual orientation, or veteran status should be directed to the Office of Equity and Diversity (OED), 920 Madison Avenue, Suite 420, Memphis, Tennessee 38163, telephone 901-448-7382 (V/TTY available). Requests for accommodation of a disability should be directed to the ADA Coordinator at the Office of Equity and Diversity.

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