

DIVERSITY MATTERS

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Black History Month in February celebrates the contributions that African Americans have made to American history in their struggles for freedom and equality and deepens our understanding of our Nation's history. As a Harvard-trained historian, Carter G. Woodson, like W. E. B. Du Bois before him, believed that truth could not be denied and that reason would prevail over prejudice. His hopes to raise awareness of African American's contributions to civilization was realized when he and the organization he founded, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), conceived and announced Negro History Week in 1925. The event was first celebrated during a week in February 1926 that encompassed the birthdays of both Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass.

The response was overwhelming: Black history clubs sprang up; teachers demanded materials to instruct their pupils; and progressive whites, not simply white scholars and philanthropists, stepped forward to endorse the effort. By 1950, Negro History Week had become a central part of African American life and substantial progress had been made in bringing more Americans to appreciate the celebration. The celebration was expanded to a month in 1976 and renamed Black History Month.

The purpose of Black History month is to educate both African American and Non-African Americans on African American History while honoring the African Americans who have positively affected our nation. In 1986, Congress passed [Public Law 99-244](#) which designated February 1986 as "National Black (Afro-American) History Month." This law noted that February 1, 1986 would "mark the beginning of the sixtieth annual public and private salute to Black History." For more information please visit <http://www.africanamericanhistorymonth.gov/index.html>

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A Note from the Assistant Vice Chancellor

Diversity and Inclusion: UTHSC's Funeral and Bereavement Leave Policy

Diversity is often described as being similarities and differences in addition to being described as the “mix” with inclusion being “how the mix works” within an organization. One way the University of Tennessee (UT) campuses maintain and enhance a diverse and inclusive culture is through its many policies. In this instance, we will focus on the funeral and bereavement leave policy (HR Policy 0340). This policy demonstrates how diversity and inclusion is an advantage in light of those referenced similarities and differences.

The objective of UT's system wide [funeral and bereavement leave policy](#) is to provide time off without loss of pay for regular university employees for bereavement and to attend the funeral of a close relative. Guidelines for this policy advise:

1. An employee who is absent during a regularly scheduled work week due to the death of a spouse, child or step-child, or parent or step-parent, may receive payment for reasonable and customary days absent, not to exceed five (5) regularly scheduled work days for bereavement in conjunction with attending the funeral.
2. An employee who is absent for funeral and bereavement during a regularly scheduled work week due to the death of a grandparent, grandchild, parent-in-law, foster parent, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, or son-in-law may receive payment for reasonable and customary days absent, not to exceed three (3) regularly scheduled work days.

The referenced policy demonstrates UT employees are valued because of, and not in spite of, their differences. The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) is a workplace with team members from many different cultures of varying religious beliefs. It goes without saying that memorable life events for each team member will be celebrated differently. Meaning, death and grief are normal life events that touch all of us but more important the feelings and symptoms of grief may affect our health and well-being or how we function at work. When a member of the UTHSC community is grieving the loss of a loved one, colleague or co-worker, the entire workplace (i.e., office; unit; department) feels the effect.

Bereavement leave is also paid leave that an employee is entitled to per the following policy excerpt:

3. Pay for each day of funeral and bereavement leave taken will be made at the employee's current rate of pay for a scheduled day's work not to exceed the hours for which the employee is normally scheduled to work. Any holidays and days of administrative closing occurring during this time will be counted as part of the funeral and bereavement leave and recorded as holiday(s) or day(s) of administrative closing pay.
4. An employee may be required to furnish verification of the reason for the absence upon request of his or her supervisor or the campus human resources office.

A closer look advises that the funeral and bereavement policy enables an employee to attend the funeral, services, ceremonies, and/or interment, make necessary arrangements, any travel related to a death and bereavement time. Because the workplace is more diverse there may be consideration for unusual circumstances (i.e., attending funeral services outside the U.S.; remains being transported from overseas). Managers and administrators also have the flexibility to grant requests for additional paid (as available and appropriate) and unpaid leave time beyond the paid bereavement leave to the extent practicable. This is just another way UT demonstrates being supportive of its employees through a policy that specifically acknowledges loss of an immediate family and other relatives. UTHSC's [Office of Human Resources](#) can provide additional guidance on the funeral and bereavement policy that includes information about the [employee assistance program](#) (EAP).

UTHSC's Office of Equity and Diversity responded to several faculty and staff requests in September 2010 that encouraged greater campus communication regarding the loss of a team member and a team member's personal loss. 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 announce the loss of a team member and loss in a team member's immediate and extended families to include funeral arrangements/services. To join as a voluntary subscriber go to <http://listserv.uthsc.edu/mailman/listinfo/condolences> and complete the outlined steps to become a member.

In closing, UT's funeral and bereavement policy clearly supports the full integration of all team members beyond race, ethnicity, gender and religion while demonstrating fair employment practices, an openness to difference and a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Reactivation of the ADA Advisory Committee

The Office of Equity and Diversity created the ADA Advisory Committee in August 2008 to be more effective in responding to ADA and Section 504 related concerns. According to Lee (1994), a simple definition of an advisory committee is a group of volunteers that meets regularly on a long-term basis to provide advice and/or support to an institution or one of its subunits.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, advise that no qualified person will be denied access to, participation in, or the benefits of, any program or activity operated by UTHSC because of disability. UTHSC will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in employment practices and activities, including, but not limited to, application procedures, hiring, tenure, promotion, advancement, termination, training, compensation and benefits. Moreover, UTHSC will not discriminate against a qualified individual because of the known disability of another individual with whom the qualified individual is known to have a relationship or association.

The mission of the reactivated ADA Advisory Committee is to assist in the continued development of accessibility at UTHSC. The committee is comprised of several UTHSC faculty and staff members from varying departments. Below is the charge and the 2015 members of the ADA Advisory Committee.

Charge to the Committee

- advise the Office of Equity and Diversity regarding activities that would heighten disability awareness and sensitivity issues on campus;
- make recommendations regarding development and implementation of policies and procedures in the area of services to students and employees with disabilities;
- advise the Office of Equity and Diversity and other university offices related to disability services in addressing the needs and concerns of students and employees with disabilities; make recommendations on how to best provide input to the campus on concerns and issues related to architectural and existing facility barriers;

The committee will not be limited to these matters, but will focus on them as matters of greatest concern.

ADA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Shawn Bryan (OIT)	Myra Meekins (COHP-PT)
Kathy Gibbs (SASSI)	David Eppes (ITS)
Gary White (Facilities Admin.)	Donna Lenoir (Human Resources)
Kendal Booker (COHP-OT)	Laurie Brooks (SASSI)
Kenneth Bradshaw (Facilities Admin.)	Bruce Holden (Campus Police)
Amber Carter (Comm. & Marketing)	Tanara Teal-Tate (Parking Services)
Carol Likens (COHP-PT)	Leilani Collins (COHP-OH)
	Denice Perkins (CDD)
Michael Alston, Chair (OED)	
Ashleigh Brock, Chair's Designee (OED)	

If you have any concerns, requests, or complaint in these areas of the law, please contact the Office of Equity and Diversity by calling (901) 448-2112. For more information please view the OED Persons with Disabilities page at the following link: <http://www.uthsc.edu/oed/disabilities.php>. There you will also find forms to request accessible parking and reasonable accommodations.



2015 Service Recognition

Lichterman Award



**2015 Thomas Connell Lichterman Award Winner
Ruby McNeal**

This Lichterman Award is presented annually to a non-exempt UT or UTMG employee who demonstrates the high standards and positive characteristics as they were exemplified by Thomas Connell Lichterman. Ruby McNeal is the 2015 Lichterman Award winner. Ms. McNeal currently works as an Administrative Coordinator in Microbiology, Immunology & Biochemistry departments with 13 years of service at UTHSC. The winner of the Lichterman receives a plaque and a \$1,500 gift.



2015 Chancellor's Exempt Staff Nakeshi Dyer Award

The Chancellor's Exempt Staff Award (CESA) at UT Health Science Center is presented annually to recognize an employee who has demonstrated outstanding service and/or who has made significant contributions to the University community beyond that normally expected for their positions. All exempt faculty staff of UT Health Science Center are eligible.

In 2015, one deserving employee was the recipient of the CESA Nakeshi Dyer. At the receipt of her award, Nakeshi had 4 years of service and today works as an Educational Specialist in Student Academic Support Services and Inclusion (SASSI). The winner received a plaque and a \$1,500 gift respectively.

Chancellor's Exempt Staff Award



Pictures from 2015 Veterans Day Celebration



OED Accomplishments



Dustin Fulton, MS
Sr. Equity Assurance
Administrator

Dustin successfully completed the **Workforce Diversity Certificate Program** offered by **UCLA Extension and the National Organization for Workforce Diversity (NOW Diversity)**. The program focused on best practices in the workplace that advance diversity awareness and inclusion.



Ashleigh Brock, JD
Equity Assurance Administrator

Ashleigh successfully completed the **Workforce Diversity Certificate Program** offered by **UCLA Extension and the National Organization for Workforce Diversity (NOW Diversity)**. The program focused on best practices in the workplace that advance diversity awareness and inclusion.



Jenna Fielding
Associate Equity Assurance
Specialist

Jenna recently completed the **Myer's Briggs Type Indicator Certification**. The Myer's Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is one of the most widely used personality assessments, used to increase one's understanding of oneself and others. MBTI Certified Practitioners both administer the assessment and interpret its results.

Community Events

January/ February



The Lion In Winter
 Presented by Theater Memphis
 January 22 - February 7, 2016
 630 Perkins Extd,
 Memphis, TN 38117
<http://www.theatrememphis.org/>

Historical Fiction. After a decade of imprisonment for her part in rebellion against her husband King Henry II of England, Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine arrives at court during a Christmas furlough and proceeds to scheme to challenge the King's authority and his choice of heir to the throne. The fray engulfs their three sons and French royalty who all lay claims to rule.



The Juneteenth Story

Cannon Center for the Performing Arts
 Feb 4, 2016 - Feb 5, 2016
 255 N. Main
 Memphis, TN 38103
<http://www.memphistravel.com/conventions/cannon-center/events-calendar>

The audience will go on a dramatic "Journey Back in Time" when the first twenty Africans were discovered on a Dutch Freighter that docked in Jamestown, Virginia in 1619. They will experience spectacular historical events that caused the enslavement of Africans and the events that eventually dismantled the Slave System in America. They will also witness several demonstrations like picking and chopping cotton, a slave auction, how to read secret quilt codes, a Civil Rights March and plenty of "Bouncing into Black History Through Music" songs.



DUNCAN-WILLIAMS PERFORMANCE HALL

GERMANTOWN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



IRIS: Midori

January 23, 2016 @ 8:00 PM
 Bizet: Symphony in C
 Carter: Symphony No. 1 (1942)
 Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto



PB&J presents: Abule Fan Music and Dance

February 13, 2016 @ 9:30 AM

Abule Fan Music & Dance strives to educate communities on traditional African diasporic culture through music, song, dance and storytelling.

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) 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 enables access to everyone. <http://www.gpacweb.com/>

January

2016 Religious Holidays

February

January 1 Mary, Mother of God - **Catholic Christian**
Feast Day of St Basil - **Orthodox Christian**
Gantan-sai (New Years) - **Shinto**

January 5 Twelfth Night - **Christian**
Guru Gobindh Singh birthday - **Sikh**

January 6 Epiphany - **Christian**
Feast of the Epiphany (Theophany) - **Orthodox Christian**
Dia de los Reyes (Three Kings Day) - **Christian**
Nativity of Christ - **Armenian Orthodox Christian**

January 7 Feast of the Nativity - **Orthodox Christian**

January 8 Feast of the Holy Family - **Catholic Christian**

January 10 Baptism of the Lord Jesus - **Christian**

January 13 Maghi - **Sikh**

January 17 Blessing of the Animals - **Hispanic Catholic Christian**
World Religion Day - **Baha'i**

January 18-25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - **Christian**

January 20 Timkat - **Ethiopian Orthodox Christian**

January 24-27 Mahayana New Year ** - **Buddhist**

January 25 Conversion of St. Paul - **Christian**
Tu BiShvat - **Jewish**

February 1 Clean Monday - **Orthodox Christian**

February 2 Candlemas - Presentation of Christ in the Temple - **Christian**
Imbolc- Lughnassad * - **Wicca/Pagan** Northern and Southern Hemispheres
Saint Brigid of Kildare - **Celtic Christian**

February 3 St. Blaze Day - **Christian**
Setsebun sai ** - **Shinto**

February 7 Four Chaplains Sunday - **Interfaith**
Transfiguration Sunday - **Christian**

February 8 Chinese New Year - **Confucian, Daoist, Buddhist**

February 9 Shrove Tuesday - **Christian**

February 10 Ash Wednesday - **Christian**

February 12 Triodion - **Orthodox Christian**
Vasant Panshami ** - **Hindu**

February 14 St. Valentine's Day - **Christian**

February 15 Nirvana Day ** - **Buddhist - Jain**

February 26 Intercalary Days begin - **Baha'i**

Equity & Diversity

Black History Month

Commemorative Month Film
Discussion & ViewingFilm: *Selma*

Date/Time: Feb. Feb. 23, 2016 12:00-2:30pm

Location: GEB A-203

Bring your lunch and discuss the film.

The University of Tennessee is an
EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section
504/ADA/ADEA/V institution in the provision
of its education and employment programs
and services.

 THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER.

Tour an online-exhibit !

Separate is Not Equal
Brown v. Board of Education

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/brown/exhibition/index.html>

Accessible Parking

Effective Jan 1, 2016, Employees and Students who qualify for Accessible Parking on the UTHSC campus are required to renew their parking annually to the Office of Equity and Diversity.

Re-submissions are due by **February 29, 2016**. Click [here](#) for form.



Take an Interactive Road trip!

Historical Places of the Civil Rights
Movement: We Shall OvercomeA National Register of Historic Places
Travel Itinerary

<http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/index.htm>



Request a Workshop

https://jfe.qualtrics.com/form/SV_cJdCwxN8NwB4hvf

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