



DIVERSITY • EQUITY • INCLUSION NATIONAL CORE

Greetings, colleagues!

I am excited to launch my first Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) monthly newsletter. This newsletter will serve as a dedicated space to share the latest DEI information at National CORE.

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide:

1. DEI resources and learning materials.
2. DEI program initiatives and event details.
3. Opportunities to connect and build community among colleagues.
4. A platform for voices across roles and departments to offer insights on a range of DEI related topics.

My hope is that this newsletter will help to illustrate the relevance and importance of DEI work across all roles, departments and regions.

I recently facilitated a workshop on inclusive language and implicit bias for the Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Bootcamp led by Dr. AJ Galka. The overall 2-day virtual training was incredibly impactful and I'd highly encourage more of you to sign up and take the next one in-person if you are able.

In this month's newsletter, I offer a range of learning resources in celebration of Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month and Mental Health Awareness Month. I'm also excited to share a June training opportunity. I will be partnering with our Spectrum Affinity Group to offer Safe Zone training in recognition of PRIDE Month. I hope to see many of you there!

Enjoy the first DEI newsletter! As always, please reach out with questions, comments or suggestions.

In this newsletter you can expect:

Message from
DEI Director

Celebrating
Asian American &
Pacific Islander
Heritage Month

Mental Health
Awareness Month

LGBTQ Safe Zone
Training
Opportunity

Affinity Group
Interest Form



Marissika Wheaton-Greer



Reflections on AAPI Heritage Month

During the month of May, we recognize Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) heritage. AAPI month was first commemorated in 1979 as a week and later expanded to the full month in 1992.

AAPI Month is an important part of our United States history that is often overlooked. Asian Americans have played a critical role in the foundation and progress of our country. From the first Chinese immigrants who built the Transcontinental Railroad and the Filipino Farm Labor Union that led the Delano Grape Strike, to the countless Cambodian refugees who created the donut industry as we know it today. Asian American and Pacific Islander communities are vast and diverse with about 50 ethnic groups and over 100 languages.

The term "Asian American" was coined in 1968 by student activists Emma Gee and Yuji Ichioka, as a unifying political identity for different groups of people of Asian descent. Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander" refers to communities representing the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

At National CORE and Hope Through Housing, we serve a diverse array of communities, which includes the AAPI community. Take time to honor Asian American and Pacific Islander history and heritage by learning more!

AAPI Resource List

Watch

PBS Documentary | [Asian Americans](#)

A five-part series told through intimate personal stories, the series casts a new lens on U.S. history and the role that Asian Americans have played.

[A People's History of Asian America](#)

South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander voices to explore the pros and cons of disaggregating Asian American as a statistical category.

[The Model Minority Myth](#)

Journalist Dion Lim covered violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders during the pandemic. She explains how the model minority myth came to be and why she doesn't take it as a compliment.

Documentary | [Donut King](#)

The unlikely story of a Cambodian refugee arriving in America in 1975 and building a multi-million-dollar empire baking America's favorite pastry.

Read

[AAPI Heritage Month Resources](#)

This site presents only a sample of the digital and physical holdings related to Asian/Pacific heritage available from the Library of Congress and other participating agencies.

[Community Organizations](#)

AAPI Directory curated by Asian Americans Advancing Justice.



A Collection of Employee Reflections:

As the son of a Chinese-Indonesian immigrant, AAPI Heritage Month holds deep meaning for me. My parents' journey of escaping religious persecution and supporting each other through every challenge is a testament to their determination and courage, inspiring me daily.

-- **Rhesa Hardjadinata, Administrative Operations Analyst**

I am always so proud to let people know that I am Korean. I recognize what it cost my grandma to make it to this country, and I have a responsibility to embrace our culture and traditions, advocate for representation and equity, and celebrate the resilience and contributions of my ancestors.

-- **Nikki Butler, Learning & Development Specialist**

I am very proud of the contributions of Asian Americans. It would be nice if it was in history books a lot more.

-- **Mark Van, Compliance Specialist**

As an Asian American, I am appreciative of AAPI Heritage Month, because it means that we, Asians/Pacific Islanders, are being recognized as valuable members in the community. As we are being recognized, there is a responsibility for each individual to make positive impact to the community. Let's celebrate AAPI Heritage Month as well as other months that recognize the various ethnicities.

-- **Ken Kim, Project Manager**

As the granddaughter of a Japanese immigrant, I am proud to be a part of the AAPI community. My grandmother arrived to the United States in the late 1950s as a war bride. Learning about American history through her lens has opened my eyes and ears to understanding the world beyond my own experiences. Her story like many others, demonstrates one of resilience despite many obstacles she encountered along the way.

-- **Marissiko Wheaton-Greer, Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

I am proud to share that my father emigrated from Indonesia to the United States on multiple scholarships, including one from The Rockefeller Foundation. These opportunities enabled him to earn his PhD from New York University. I am also deeply grateful to my mother, who chose to move to the United States from the Philippines to work as a Registered Nurse. Over the years, I've listened to many stories of their upbringing, celebrating their achievements, and understanding their struggles. Sometimes, I immerse myself in their narratives, imagining what life might have been like in their shoes. I owe my parents everything for giving me the chance to live and thrive in this wonderful country. For me, AAPI Month serves as a reminder of the sacrifices my parents made for a better life. I take great pride in my Asian heritage and am committed to the values it represents, such as kindness and respect. I am proud to be an American.

-- **Alvin Mamora, Chief of Staff**



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a national observance that began in 1949 by Mental Health America to bring attention to the importance of mental well-being. Throughout this month, individuals and organizations across the country step up to raise awareness of and address the challenges faced by people living with mental health conditions. It's a crucial time to reduce stigma surrounding mental health issues and highlight how mental health challenges and addiction can affect all of us.

The more we talk about mental health together, the more normalized these conversations become – ultimately empowering people to seek the help they need. Fortunately, more people are now talking about and prioritizing their mental health, just as they would their physical health. They are also embracing self-care to improve overall well-being. This is critical because when you take care of your mental health, your physical and emotional health also improves, and you're more likely to learn and work productively, and effectively cope with life stressors. However, self-care looks different for everyone. Exercise, sleep, and a balanced diet might be the strategy for some, while others might benefit from joining a support group, or seeing a mental health professional. It's important to identify what works best for you!

Consider joining the Health and Wellness Affinity Group to be in community with others who are prioritizing self-care.

(Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA)



Understanding Mental Health

[Resources by category](#)

Tips and Resources To Help Take Care of Your Mental Health.

[Data Report on Drug Use & Health](#)

Report underscoring that our nation is facing an unprecedented mental health crisis among people of all ages and backgrounds.

[How to Talk About Mental Health](#)

Resources to help you feel more informed to talk about mental health with the people in your life who may need your support.

Watch

[Brene Brown on Empathy](#)

Dr Brené Brown reminds us that we can only create a genuine empathic connection if we are brave enough to really get in touch with our own fragilities.

[Why is Mental Health Important?](#)

Conversations on mental health featuring Dr. Larry Kubiak, PhD.

[Check In On Those Around You](#)

At times, it can be obvious when someone is struggling to cope. But sometimes the signs are harder to spot.

Self-Care Resources

- [Self Care Assessment Worksheet](#)
- [Self Care Wheel](#)
- [Calm App](#)
- [Headspace App](#)
- [Strides App](#)
- [MyFitnessPal App](#)

Opportunities to learn and engage with colleagues



LGBTQ Safe Zone Training

During the month of June, PRIDE Month celebrates the LGBTQ community. In recognition of PRIDE Month, DEI and Spectrum will Co-host a Safe Zone Training for all employees during CORE Week, which takes place 6/17-6/21. Be on the lookout for a link to RSVP!

What is Safe Zone Training?

Safe Zone training is a nationally-recognized training program that provides education and tools to create change and make spaces safer for those who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Nonbinary, Queer/Questioning.

Guest Facilitator | Dr. Sharon Chia Claros

Sharon Chia Claros is a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging practitioner-scholar with over a 20-year track record for delivering sustainable and thoughtful change to educational institutions. She has been a trusted partner to Chief Diversity Officers, Executive Management Teams, senior faculty and leadership teams for bringing DEIB initiatives and promising practices to promote cultures of inclusion and belonging.



Sign-up for an Affinity Group!

Affinity Groups (AG) are an integral component of National CORE's commitment to drive change in diversity and inclusion. An Affinity Group is a group of varied employees who actively engage in communicating and participating around a central unifying purpose, background or activity, which is consistent with the Diversity Statement of National CORE. Beneficial relationships should be developed between Affinity Groups, CORE and its workforce, as well as with the communities we serve. We invite you to join the AG community!

Take a moment to **complete this interest form to learn more about each AG**. There are no obligations or additional responsibilities added to your job when you express interest. This is simply an opportunity to learn more about how to connect with colleagues who share common identities and/or interests.

Thank you for reading!

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? EMAIL
MARISSIKO, DIRECTOR OF DEI

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