

Belonging

the newsletter from the *FIRST* NC ED&I Team – April 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.

Hey North Carolina - we NEED your input!

Calling all teams, students, Alum, mentors and coaches we need your input to fill this space!

As famously spoken in the world of FIRST, *Coopertition*, is the concept and philosophy that teams can and should help and cooperate with one another when in competition involving learning from teammates and other teams.

We would love to share the varied and unique stories of all of those who make up the unique tapestry of FIRST Robotics here in North Carolina. Each of us has something meaningful to share (even if our own experiences don't always feel as meaningful to ourselves).

Help us by sharing your stories that continue to inspire other teams, whether it be through the form of advice, lessons learned or the do's and don'ts of daily team logistics, etc.

Engage with your alumni, and invite them to share their journeys, as well as how FIRST has impacted them! We would love to include them in our Inspiration & Recognition Spotlight section!

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 or use this [GOOGLE FORM](#) and we'll include them in upcoming newsletters.

From *FIRST*: Just in case you missed it! - AmeriCorps Week

AmeriCorps Week 2023, celebrated March 12-18, is a time to recognize the hard work that AmeriCorps members are putting into serving their communities and encouraging others to follow them in their service journeys. We want to thank our FIRST® AmeriCorps members and highlight the amazing work they are doing across the country to help implement FIRST programs in underserved areas. FIRST AmeriCorps members are key to delivering STEM opportunities to these areas. By serving as co-coaches for teams, mentoring students, and assisting teachers and coaches with leading FIRST programs and developing technical skills, members support their communities and expand the mission of FIRST.

Read more at <https://community.firstinspires.org/amicorps-week-thank-you-first-amicorps-members>

April Events:

April is Celebrate Diversity Month, a celebration initiated in 2004 to recognize and honor the diversity surrounding us all. By celebrating differences and similarities during this month, organizers hope that people will gain a deeper understanding of each other.

April 1: Palm Sunday is a Christian holiday commemorating the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

April 2: World Autism Awareness Day is honored to raise awareness for Autism around the globe.

April 4: Mahavir Jayanti is a holiday celebrated by the Jains commemorating the birth of Lord Mahavira.

April 5 to April 13: Passover is an eight-day Jewish holiday in commemoration of the emancipation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt.

April 6: Holy Thursday, or Maundy Thursday, is the Christian holiday commemorating the Last Supper.

April 7: Good Friday is a day celebrated by Christians to commemorate the execution of Jesus by crucifixion.

April 8: Lazarus Saturday is a day celebrated by the Eastern Orthodox Church and Oriental Orthodoxy to commemorate the raising from the dead of Lazarus of Bethany.

April 9: Easter is a holiday celebrated by Christians to recognize Jesus' return from death after the crucifixion.

April 14: Vaisakhi, or Baisakhi, is the celebration of the founding of the Sikh community as the Khalsa (community of the initiated) and the birth of the Khalsa.

April 16: Orthodox Easter, or Pascha, is a later Easter date than what is observed by many Western churches.

April 17 to April 18: Yom HaShoah is Israel's day of remembrance for the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

April 21 to April 22: Eid al-Fitr is a religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide.

April 21 to May 2: The Festival of Ridvan is a holiday celebrated by those of the Bahá'í faith.

April 22: Earth Day promotes world peace and sustainability of the planet.

April 23: St. George's Day is the feast day of St. George celebrated by various Christian churches.

April 25 to April 26 (sundown to sundown): Yom Ha'Atzmaut is the national Independence Day in Israel.

April 28: Ninth Day of Ridvan is a festival of joy and unity in the Bahá'í faith.

Inspiration & Recognition Spotlight: Naomi Edwards



After earning a degree in math and computer science, Naomi Edwards spent 15 years teaching high school students and mentoring a FIRST® team in rural Washington state. Currently in her STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art & math) career, she is a curriculum development specialist at PTC supporting Onshape, where she leverages the breadth of her career and education experience to create resources and content for students and educators. "I think it's important to just learn what you can because you never know how seemingly unrelated skills can complement each other in a career," Naomi said.

[Read Naomi's #PeopleofSTEAM story on the FIRST Community blog](#)

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 3 – Equity Actions and Solutions](#)

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 - 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>