

Belonging

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

FIRST, Project THRIVE and The Trevor Project

FIRST® is a proud partner of Project THRIVE: a multi-year effort led by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation to create more equitable, inclusive support systems and communities for LGBTQ+ youth. Project THRIVE will build the skills and capacities of all youth-serving professionals to better meet the needs of LGBTQ+ young people. The campaign is a collaborative effort of many national organizations, each committed to identifying opportunities within their own thought leadership space to increase awareness about and provide resources to address the needs of LGBTQ+ youth, and to highlight best practices and success stories from their respective professional fields.

Challenges faced by LGBTQ+ youth are changing, but what they always need is support from each other and the adults in their lives. For HRC's resources for educators, please visit WelcomingSchools.org.

If you or someone you know is in need of support relating to LGBTQ+ issues, please visit [The Trevor Project](http://TheTrevorProject.org). The Trevor Project can connect you with a trained counselor 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, from anywhere in the United States, or you can join their network to get connected with other LGBTQ+ young people. It is 100% confidential, and 100% free.

Click here to read more about [FIRST And Project THRIVE](#)

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! - How our Learning Differences are our Superpowers

By Kenny Bae, *FIRST* Tech Challenge Coach & Physics Teacher, Wolcott School, Chicago

As a teacher and robotics coach, I could not have been prouder of my students when I watched them succeed at *FIRST*® Championship Detroit in April 2019. No, I wasn't witnessing the team win a robotics match. Instead, my students were giving a conference presentation, titled "Students with Learning Differences Can Succeed in *FIRST*." They were inspiring an audience of students, parents, and coaches with their experiences and successes of participating in *FIRST*.

Read more - <https://www.firstinspires.org/community/inspire/how-learning-differences-are-super-powers>

July Events:

July is [Disability Pride Month](#)

July 1: Canada Day, or Fête du Canada, is a Canadian federal holiday that celebrates the 1867 enactment of the Constitution Act, establishing the three former British colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick as a united nation called Canada.

July 3: Asalha Puja, or Dharma Day, celebrates Buddha's first teachings.

July 4: Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, is a US federal holiday that celebrates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776.

July 9: The Martyrdom of the Bab is a day when Bahá'ís observe the anniversary of the Báb's execution in Tabriz, Iran, in 1850.

July 11: St. Benedict Day is the feast day of St. Benedict celebrated by some Christian denominations.

July 14: International Nonbinary People's Day is aimed at raising awareness and organizing around the issues faced by nonbinary people around the world while celebrating their contributions.

July 15: St. Vladimir Day is a Roman Catholic feast celebrating St. Vladimir.

July 18: Nelson Mandela International Day was established on July 18th, 2009 in recognition of Nelson Mandela's birthday via a unanimous decision of the UN General Assembly.

July 18 to July 19: Hijri New Year marks the beginning of the new Islamic calendar year.

July 23: The birthday of Haile Selassie I, the former emperor of Ethiopia whom the Rastafarians consider to be their savior, is celebrated on this day.

July 24: Pioneer Day is observed by Mormons to commemorate the arrival of the first Latter-day Saints pioneer in Salt Lake Valley in 1847.

July 25: St. James the Greater Day is a feast day for St. James the Greater celebrated by some Christian denominations.

July 26: Disability Independence Day celebrates the anniversary of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act.

July 27 (sundown) to July 28 (sundown): Ashura is an Islamic holiday marked by Muslims with a day of fasting.

July 30: The International Day of Friendship was proclaimed in 2011 by the UN General Assembly.

Inspiration & Recognition Spotlight: *George Cheng – 2023 Top Award Winner at Regeneration International Science and Engineering Fair.*



George Cheng, rising upperclassman at North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. George is an avid innovator, problem-solver, and activist in the STEM field. By intuitively combining aspects of research with translation to technology and philanthropy, George has impacted over 3,000 students in North Carolina. He has tackled both social and technological barriers ranging from regenerative medicine to diabetes diagnosis and treatment.

See Georges award winning research and presentation here:

[BMED011 — DiaMiR: A MicroRNA \(miR-23\) Microneedle Patch for Type-2 Diabetes Control](#)

Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Training: *Creating a Sense of Belonging*

Created in collaboration with Kids Included Together (KIT), this webinar training focuses on providing coaches and mentors with a better understanding of some of the challenges youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder face, and how to create a more welcoming and comfortable environment for everyone on their *FIRST* teams.

- [Creating a Sense of Belonging](#)

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>