



Goodwin  
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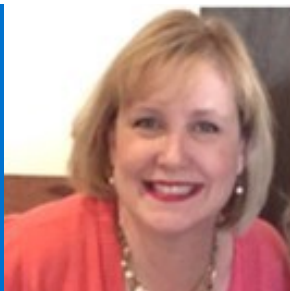


Educate. Embrace. Empower.

# Diversity, Equality & Inclusion Committee Newsletter

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Eleventh Issue | December 2023



# Introduction to this Issue

*from Jeanne Hobbs, DEI Committee Chair*

With the start of 2024, the DEI committee will enter its fourth year! As you will read in Rob's message below, Goodwin Living has made tremendous strides in our efforts to increase awareness, provide education and training, serve a more diverse population and increase leadership opportunities for all team members.

As I write this, I am at home with family and surrounded by the hope, peace, joy and love that fills my heart at Christmas. I am so lucky, too, that I work in a community where these same values are shared. I have a smile on my face as I reflect on all the love that is around me. I wish that this love would be reflected in the world. But the reality is that the world is full of conflict, hatred and divisiveness. Just recently, a man was arrested outside a local synagogue after yelling hateful remarks, the incident proving how hate is pervasive and bold. School violence is on the rise, and there are wars raging across the globe. Why is hatred so pervasive? What can we do in the face of so much hate?

## **We can be the spark.**

One of my favorite songs to listen to when hope seems far away is by the Newsboys. "It's the smallest spark that can light the dark," they sing. "That's how you change the world."

## **We can be the spark.**

Thanks to the efforts of all past and present DEI committee members, Goodwin Living has a strong foundation rooted in educating, embracing and empowering all of us to support GL and our DEI efforts. I am proud to work alongside team members and all those who are supported by Goodwin Living on and off our campuses who value the uniqueness of our organization and who call Goodwin Living a place of welcome and belonging.

Please read on to learn about our current DEI committee members. We'll share insights from new resident and team member committee members on why they joined DEI and feel our work must continue. We'll also share updates from Goodwin Living senior leaders on DEI efforts throughout our organization.

# End-of-Year Celebration from Rob Liebreich

Since 1967, Goodwin Living has thrived and benefited from a diverse community around it. We are excited by the work ahead, and we are up for the task as we support, honor and uplift lives. We are the best version of ourselves when each person can shine brightly and share their gifts completely with those around them.

Following the tragic death of George Floyd in May 2020, we decided to be more intentional with our efforts of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, and overall to create an organization of belonging. Under the capable leadership of Theresa Thomas, we formed our DEI Committee, now led by Jeanne Hobbs, and set up four goals focused on the following:

**Awareness.** We established a consistent way to share and celebrate diverse backgrounds through "Friday Thoughts," worked to create space to highlight cultures and make visible the varied talents of those who make up the Goodwin Living family, and made a paid holiday for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

**Education and Training.** We continue to seek ways to learn about the history and cultures around us by inviting in speakers and taking trips to places like the National Museum of the American Indian. We continue to invest in training programs such as SAGECare, which is focused on how to create a place of dignity and respect for all, with a focus on the LGBTQ+ population.

**Leadership Opportunities.** We changed how we post career opportunities so that EVERYONE within the organization has a chance to see them and apply. We continue to grow the number of directors and managers and additional leadership roles filled by those with diverse backgrounds. This year, we welcomed the most diverse Board of Trustees in the history of the organization as viewed through race, religion, sexuality and geography.

**Serving a More Diverse Population.** Since the DEI Committee's inception, through a continuous effort and outreach to diverse populations in the community such as our membership to the Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce, we doubled the number of residents of color on our campuses. We also served nearly 330 Black, Asian and Latino individuals through Hospice and Certified Home Health in 2023, an increase of 174% since 2021.

With intentional effort and many hands, we see success. We know that, through focus and commitment, our work will continue to thrive throughout 2024!

# Introducing Our DEI Committee Members

## G. Theresa Thomas, GHA Associate Executive Director

**Giving...Receiving.** My journey as chair of the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Committee has intensified my belief that I will never give more than I receive.

It was a privilege to give of my time, enthusiasm and passion to the Goodwin Living Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Committee. It is hard to believe we are approaching our fourth year.

Our world continues to face challenges of acceptance and inclusion. Our world leaders can learn from us: taking steps that unite and celebrate differences will produce the greatest fruits of love and belonging. Divisive tactics bolstered by underlying hatred will never create peace and therefore will always lead to a divided people and nation.

Educate, Embrace and Empower: we can all participate in the three “E’s” that guide our DEI planning and programming.

**Educate:** There is something we can learn each new day that will contribute to our understanding of each other. Look for ways to increase your diversity awareness.

**Embrace:** Welcome the difference you bring into a room, conversation and relationship, and embrace the same from others. Do not cringe, flinch or shut down. Smile and acknowledge differences, and seek to understand. I was amazed by my own ignorance of what makes each person, culture and religion beautiful. Over the last four years I have learned how limited my world was; it is wonderful to enjoy the fullness of wonder that comes with embracing others.



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# Introducing Our DEI Committee Members

**Empower:** No one can be better at being you than you, and through our DEI efforts we have set a standard that empowers residents, members and team members to show up and shine...BE YOU, and we enthusiastically welcome you. I hope we all feel empowered to speak our truth, live our lives freely and openly, cry in support of each other and celebrate the beauty of being a community where inclusion is part of our mission.

The list of things I have received from serving on the DEI committee is longer than paper will allow me to list. As a child, I had open heart surgery. I could not find the words at age nine to explain this to my friends. I simply said, "they made my heart bigger so I could love more."

The DEI committee provided me with an opportunity to increase my awareness that all acts that devalue another person are wrong, and that disparity in any form is unacceptable and must be addressed. My greatest lesson is that I am a part of the problem *and* the solution. I contribute to the problem when I refuse to speak up or acknowledge my own bias. I contribute to the solution when I intentionally have open and honest conversations, allowing my thoughts to expand and my heart to give an abundance of love and inclusiveness.

I am looking forward to the exciting ways our new DEI Chair, Jeanne Hobbs, and the committee members will continue to grow our organization's diversity goals. Please continue to share your thoughts and be actively involved in the work of DEI.

## **Theresa Mandela, StrongerMemory Outreach Coordinator**

I bring more than 40 years of experience as a registered nurse in service to older adults. I was born at nearby Joint Base Andrews and attended George Mason University before beginning my career working with underserved patients in southeast D.C.



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# Introducing Our DEI Committee Members

As the StrongerMemory Outreach Coordinator at Goodwin Living, I interact with senior living organizations across the nation that are providing support to those seeking to improve brain health within their communities.

I am a certified dementia practitioner with additional credentials in quality improvement and cognitive assessment.

Often times, I am that friendly voice in meetings challenging healthcare teams to remember to address disparities and social determinants of health. As a 10<sup>th</sup> generation Marylander, I collect antique Delmarva maps and still root for the Orioles.

## **Estephanie Rubio, GHBC Facilities Management Assistant Manager/ Service Coordinator**

I have worked at Goodwin Living for 11 wonderful years! I love how the DEI Committee represents the different people in Goodwin Living and ensures that everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute.

What I enjoy about this committee is that it brings together all of our organization. Each member brings their own knowledge and experiences. When we connect and engage with team members, residents and guests with different perspectives than our own, we can more successfully achieve our overall goals. I love to learn new things and I feel more comfortable in sharing my unique ideas and perspectives because I can sense that my differences are genuinely respected and appreciated.

Together, the values of diversity, equality and inclusion help create a workplace culture that drives our business forward.



# Introducing Our DEI Committee Members

## Ayan Sharif, GHA Staffing Coordinator

I was born and raised in Alexandria, Va. with my family, who are from Somalia. I started out as a Care Partner in the Small Houses at Goodwin House Alexandria in 2017. My current role is Staffing Coordinator for the Health Care Center at GHA. I am currently studying at George Mason University to complete my Bachelors Degree in Healthcare Administration.



### Why I Joined the DEI Committee:

Goodwin Living is home to a diverse group of individuals. It is important that everyone feels included and a part of the community. The DEI Committee strives to promote and achieve equality and diversity within the organization, making sure that everyone's voice matters. I'm glad to be a part of a committee that makes sure everyone's voice is heard. Through all the events, celebrations and Friday Thoughts, we all get to learn more about the world around us through the people we see every day.

## Allison Jarboe, Goodwin Rehabilitation Speech Therapist

DEI is an intricate and important part of the Goodwin Living community. I greatly enjoy reading Friday Thoughts and learning from the insight it provides on a variety of topics.

My experiences working in the community and across our three campuses have shown me the importance of the DEI committee's initiatives when providing services to a diverse patient base. I believe these experiences can further the DEI Committee's mission of informing and celebrating the unique differences of team members, residents and patients as well as providing the highest quality of care.



# Introducing Our DEI Committee Members

## **Alison Schroeder, GHA Arts Coordinator**

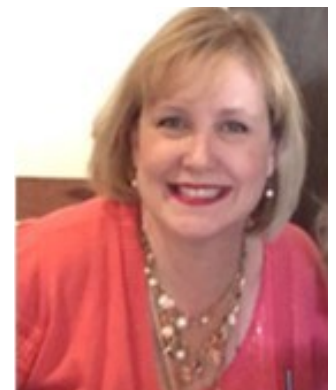
I was born in Washington, D.C. to a Colombian-American family. After studying painting at Rhode Island School of Design, I went to a language immersion program in Cuernavaca, Morelos (Mexico) where I met the person who would eventually become my husband. I spent 12 years in Cuernavaca, where I ran an independent art gallery, taught art and English to grades 1-9, and received my MFA at the Autonomous University of Morelos.



Since moving back to the D.C. area with my husband, two sons and dog (Toto) in 2014, I have maintained a practice of making and showing my artwork while also using art to assist people with special needs. I have worked as the Arts Coordinator at GHA since July 2022.

## **Jeanne Hobbs, HRIS and Benefits Manager and DEI Committee Chair**

I am grateful to all present and past DEI Committee members, and especially to Theresa Thomas for their tireless efforts to bring the DEI Committee to 2024 with all its successes. In this work, it is very true that no one knows everything, but together we know a lot – we all have something to learn from everyone we encounter.



I'm excited to learn from fellow committee members – and you – as we work together to create and sustain a place of welcome and belonging for all. This year, the committee will bring new learning opportunities and celebrations that honor all those who work here and those who are supported by Goodwin Living. We welcome your ideas, feedback, questions and concerns as we continue the journey to educate, embrace and empower all to support diversity, equality and inclusion.

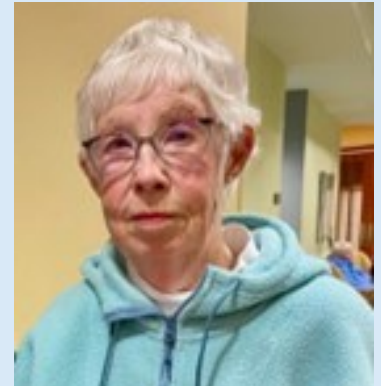


# Introducing Our DEI Committee Members

## Betsy Stephens, GHBC Resident

I grew up near Boston, Mass., then came to Johns Hopkins School of Nursing in Baltimore, Md. There, I met my future husband, married and then moved to England for four years for his work. Our two sons were born there.

Returning home to Alexandria, Va., I worked as a psych nurse for 20 years. I got an MSW degree focused in mental health and geriatrics. In retirement, I have done many volunteer jobs including chairing my church's Care Team for 14 years.



### Why We Joined the DEI Committee:

*GHBC Residents Betsy Stevens and Catherine Irwin*

To fully achieve inclusion, equality and diversity within the Goodwin Living community, it's imperative that everyone has a place at the table. We take our roles representing the residents at GHBC seriously. We come to the table with open minds, eager to learn and share with other committee members who are team members.

As resident members, we bring much to committee discussions. Our life experiences put us in a good position to share ideas and offer wisdom. We also know that we have a great deal to learn from others at the table and strive to stay open and willing to increase our understanding of a variety of cultures and peoples. This can be challenging and difficult, but the results are gratifying.

Residents who serve on the committee become ambassadors for DEI activities and events, increasing communications to fellow residents throughout Goodwin Living.

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# Introducing Our DEI Committee Members



Did we say how invaluable the experience has been for both of us? It has been a great opportunity to get to know team members across departments as well as residents from The View and GHA. We have learned about other cultures and have engaged in a wide variety of events. Participating in cultural meals, dances and musical events has been especially fun.

We have both found our work on the committee to be highly enjoyable and gratifying. We encourage other residents to become involved.

## Catherine Irwin, GHBC Resident

I moved to GHBC in October 2021. I have a strong interest and background in social justice work, as well as non-profit management. At GHBC I lead the Play Reading Group, and I am a member of the Green Team and participate in the Creative Writing Group.

I have served on the Board of Shepherdstown Area Independent Living (SAIL), an organization serving seniors in West Virginia. I have also served on the boards of the American Conservation Film Festival (ACFF) and of SkyTruth, an international conservation organization. In addition, I have volunteered with teens through a special LGBTQ+ program for youth.



**If you have a passion to educate, embrace and empower diversity, we need you!**

If you are interested in joining a passionate group of individuals with the single purpose of increasing diversity, equality and inclusion awareness, email us at [DEI@GoodwinLiving.org](mailto:DEI@GoodwinLiving.org).

# Leadership Reflections & Updates

## Holly Hanisian, Chief of Staff

From the inception of the DEI Committee, the Strategy Team (ST) was intentional in not setting a prescriptive path for the goals of the committee. Rather, we utilized a strategy to support the committee by aligning the organization's resources and efforts alongside the work of the DEI Committee, working together to strengthen the organizational value of "Community: We seek to create and sustain strong and caring communities where those who live, work and visit will find places of welcome and belonging." To keep DEI efforts at the heart of our leadership, we focus our efforts on four broad goals that are incorporated into our ST team goals:

- Provide education and space for conversations to support understanding of DEI.
- Work towards representative diversity within leadership roles at Goodwin Living.
- Ensure an organizational focus of serving more diverse older adults.
- Ensure senior leadership is committed to DEI education, collaboration and growth.

As our leadership team is finding ways to expand Goodwin Living services to all seniors generally, we are also specifically focused on expanding services to low-income seniors and seniors with diverse backgrounds.

In this newsletter, **Sue Dolton** will share the work of our Sales teams to increase the diversity among the resident population of our senior living communities. Additionally, our Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) served a population that was 20% diverse in Fiscal Year 2023, which is an increase from 11% in Fiscal Year 2021.

GHA Dining Services continued to prepare and deliver meals to participants of Cherry Blossom PACE. In the third quarter of 2023, they provided 319 meals per month to these individuals. Cherry Blossom PACE provides care to Alexandria residents of all income levels.

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# Leadership Reflections & Updates

**Fran Casey** will also share several ways we've intentionally focused our Human Resources efforts to support our DEI goals. As a leadership team, we have worked to expand opportunities for GL team members to gain leadership experience through service to community partnerships and leadership programs. Several of the team members serving in these leadership roles are from diverse backgrounds and the organizations served such as The Alexandria Commission on Aging, Joseph's House, Fairfax County's Long Term Care Coordinating Council, Carpenter's Shelter, and Senior Services of Alexandria serve the needs of diverse, low-income and families without homes, which increases our organizational knowledge of the needs of underserved and underrepresented members of our local community in addition to providing leadership development and networking opportunities to our team members.

As a result of supporting DEI initiatives broadly instead of prescribing a path, we believe we can support our diverse community more quickly, and in a greater variety of ways. This also gives our leadership the flexibility to respond to emerging community challenges, such as forming the Refugee Support Working Group, a taskforce of residents, team members and Strategy Team members that came together to respond to the influx of Afghan refugees to the City of Alexandria following the fall of the Taliban. Through this work, with community partners and our Talent Acquisition Team, Goodwin Living was able to host a job readiness fair for the Afghan and refugee community that helped provide the necessary skills to search for and obtain a job in the United States. The Refugee Support Working Group also worked to donate used GL and resident furniture for housing needs.

As we look forward to 2024, we recognize that there is continued work to be done. The Strategy Team is focused on increasing the ways GL serves an increasingly diverse group of residents, members, patients and team members. We will do this through our ongoing support of the DEI Committee, continued focus on our DEI goals and initiatives and deepening our understanding of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion through education and meaningful conversation. We are grateful to Theresa, Jeanne and the DEI Committee members who have dedicated their time and expertise to be our partners on this journey!

# Leadership Reflections & Updates

## **Fran Casey, Chief People Officer**

As I reflect over the last year, I am heartened to see the progress made to create an inclusive workforce where all team members will find a place of welcome and belonging. As an organization that strives for excellence in all we do, when we reach one pinnacle, we raise the bar and set our sights higher.

In an effort to increase diversity at the most senior levels of the organization, we were very intentional in our outreach to encourage people of diverse backgrounds to apply for open opportunities. We are committed to expanding the ways we cultivate a pipeline of qualified candidates. This includes partnerships with organizations serving immigrant populations.

### **Promotions:**

Of the 59 team members who were promoted this year to new positions within Goodwin Living, 85% fell into a minority category (i.e. team members who self-identify as any of the following: non-white, immigrant or LGBTQ+).

### **Leadership:**

This year, we added three new leadership groups. Here is a current list of existing and new leadership groups:

#### **Existing Leadership Groups:**

- Goodwin Living Board of Trustees - this group is the Goodwin Living governing board, and includes 13 individuals - 38.5% diversity.
- Strategy Team - this group consists of the Home Office team and includes eight team members - 12.5% diversity.

#### **New Leadership Groups:**

- Goodwin Management Team (GMT) - this group, formally the Senior Leadership Team, includes Directors, Executive Directors, Administrators, Associate Directors and Senior Level Managers. It includes 90 members, 30% of whom are diverse.

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# Leadership Reflections & Updates

- Home Office Leadership Team (HOLT) – This group includes leaders from departments that support the entire organization (e.g. Goodwin Living Foundation, IT, HR, Finance, Supply Chain, MarComms, etc.) and members of the Strategy Team. Of the 22 members of this team, 36% are diverse.
- Engagement Management Team – this team includes Talent Acquisition and the People Engagement Manager. They are committed to supporting the work of the DEI Committee and seeking ways to expand our reach. This may come through internships, partnerships, hiring events, workshops designed to assist people new to the United States, or program development targeted at preparing current team members for future growth.

We welcome the ideas and suggestions of others. Together we are stronger.

## Sue Dolton, Director of Sales

At Goodwin Living, we delight in seeing how everyone is cultivating welcoming, diverse and inclusive campuses at GHA, GHBC and TVA. Over the past two years, our collective efforts have made it possible for the Sales team to be part of welcoming 16 new residents of color and nine residents who self-identify as gay or lesbian. We believe that diversity is not only about numbers; it's also about creating an environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging. We are grateful to witness the inclusive spirit that residents and team members have demonstrated, making our new residents feel welcomed and embraced. By actively participating in the process of creating a welcoming environment, you contribute to the vibrancy and inclusivity that define Goodwin Living.

We are also grateful for the opportunity to share several of the ways we've reached out to more diverse groups:

**In 2022**, Goodwin Living joined the Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce (NVBCC). Members of the Sales team, our Home and Community Based Services teams and other team members throughout the organization have participated in multiple NVBCC events and gotten to know other NVBCC members. We are delighted to share that NVBCC has invited Goodwin Living to present a "State of Aging" seminar to NVBCC members and the older adults in their lives. This event will take place in early 2024.

# Leadership Reflections & Updates

**Throughout 2023**, Goodwin Living increased our participation in the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, which for the first time in its history was chaired by a Black woman, Nicole McGrew. In addition to serving on Nicole's incoming chair event committee earlier this year, Goodwin Living was invited to host the Chamber's Professional Women's Network end-of-year event on Nov. 2. Nearly 40% of the attendees at the event, which we hosted at GHA, were women of color. It was the first time this group chose to hold an event at a Goodwin Living campus.

**In 2023**, we updated many of our marketing materials and the photography we use in marketing. A key aspect of our commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion at Goodwin Living is the intentional representation of diversity in our marketing materials such as brochures, newspaper ads, digital ads and our website. We have practiced this intentional representation for many years, and continued this commitment in our latest marketing materials. By showcasing individuals of various ethnicities, backgrounds, ages, sexual orientations and abilities, we strive to create a visual narrative that resonates with the inclusivity that defines Goodwin Living. When potential residents and families see themselves represented in our marketing materials, they are more likely to envision a community where all will be accepted and where their perspectives and life experiences will be valued.

As we look ahead and strive to serve a more diverse population of older adults as residents, members and patients, we welcome your suggestions, input and support of our efforts!

## Lindsay Hutter, Chief Strategy & Marketing Officer

### **Team members of color supported by GL in community service roles:**

- **Timaeus Reed:** appointed in 2023 to the Alexandria Commission on Aging's Community Engagement Committee. The Commission on Aging (COA) serves as the principal advocate for issues relating to aging and promotes the implementation of the Older Americans Act and other age-pertinent laws and policies in Alexandria and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Commission advances programs and services that address the needs of older Alexandrians, especially for (but not exclusively) low-income residents.

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# Leadership Reflections & Updates

- **Nana Sarpong:** elected in 2023 to the Board of Directors for Joseph's House. Since its start in 1990 (during the height of the AIDS epidemic) Joseph's House has provided support to unhoused members of the D.C. community dying of AIDS. Over time, their services have expanded to include care for people with all stages of AIDS or terminal cancer, allowing them to reach a wider audience.

## Team members elected to community service roles in support of diverse citizens:

- **Eileen Spinella:** elected in 2023 to the Fairfax County Long Term Care Coordinating Council. The LTCCC works with residents, advocates, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, businesses, local governments and faith communities to achieve its vision of an "inclusive, supportive community of all ages and abilities in the Fairfax area." Its mission is to identify needs and promote solutions that enhance the lives of older adults, adults with disabilities and caregivers so all can participate fully in the community.
- **Lindsay Hutter:** elected in 2023 to the Carpenter's Shelter Board of Directors. The mission of the Carpenter's Shelter is to support people experiencing and at risk of homelessness to achieve sustainable independence through shelter and housing placement, guidance, education and advocacy. Carpenter's Shelter served more than 624 homeless and formerly homeless children and adults last year.

Of the four team members who have participated in **Leadership Alexandria** (a year-long community engagement program), the most recent two are team members who reflect the diversity of Goodwin Living: Kim Butler, GHA and Nana Sarpong, Goodwin Hospice.

# DEI Committee Celebrations & Events in 2023

As our growth and celebrations continue, take a brief look at the notable events that brought people together throughout 2023. We look forward to reaching the end of 2024 and having even more remarkable memories to share with all Goodwin Living team members, residents and members across our campuses and service lines.

## February, March and April

The DEI committee hosted **Lunch and Learn events** for team members at all three campuses. In total, around 50 team members attended and learned about important aspects of foods in their cultures from fellow team members.

## June

**Celebrating Juneteenth:** DEI Committee members worked in collaboration with Life Enrichment, Dining Services and resident volunteers to host celebrations at each campus.

## July

**DEI Third Anniversary Celebration:** DEI celebrated its third anniversary with cake and punch at each community. [Click here](#) to see the video Rob and Theresa created for the third anniversary.

## August

**GHBC Resident Resource Fair:** Residents Catherine Irwin and Judith Knee, both members of the DEI Committee, participated in the resource fair by distributing informational flyers, answering questions and encouraging residents to become actively involved with the committee.

## September

**Interfaith Discussion at TVA:** This event, hosted at TVA and organized by Liz Pomerleau and Kathy Howell, featured a Catholic priest (also a TVA resident), a rabbi (former CPE student) and an imam.

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# DEI Committee Celebrations & Events in 2023

The intent was to elicit their commonalities and differences as religious leaders. The event was well-attended with about 60 residents and team members, and the feedback was very positive and encouraging.

## October

**DEI Talent Show:** The first ever GL talent show featured 15 acts and just under 30 performers. The performers represented residents and team members from all three communities as well as HCBS. The audience was comprised of about 170 guests, which also included team members and residents from all three communities and HCBS. We received very positive feedback from a post-show survey, completed by 21 attendees that included, "how nice it was to mix and mingle with folks from all our campuses" and "[see] the wide variety of talents and how supporting the community is."

## Friday Thoughts of 2023

**Let's take a look back at the topics we explored in our 2023 Friday Thoughts!\***

[It's Never Too Late to Pursue Your Passion/ Social Work Month](#)

[The Holiday of Passover & Its Meaning](#)

[Love Needs No Words: World Autism Awareness Month](#)

[Judith Heumann & Disability Rights Activism](#)

[Mental Health in the Workplace and in a Senior Living Community](#)

[Older Americans Month](#)

[Loving Day](#)

[Celebrating Pride Month](#)

[Invisible Disabilities](#)

[Islamic New Year](#)

[Recognizing Women's Equity Day](#)

[Peace: The Key to a Better World](#)

[National Recovery Month](#)

[National Coming Out Day](#)

[Global Diversity Awareness Month](#)

[How We Connect with Our Heritage & Celebrate Our Ancestors](#)

[National Day of Mourning](#)

[December Celebrations – Hanukkah, Advent & Kwanzaa](#)

\*printed copies are available in the libraries at GHA, GHBC and TVA.



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