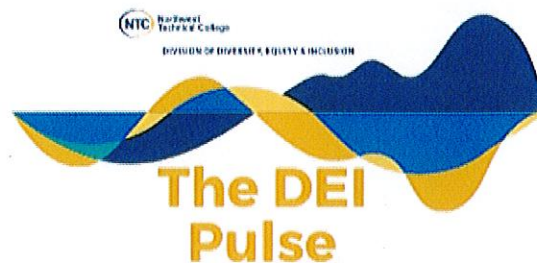




Northwest
Technical College

DIVISION OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION



CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

Black Heritage and History Experience 2023

As the fight continues to empower African Americans, Black Heritage and History Experience 2023 is a time to honor those who fought before us and celebrate the culture that we continue to advocate for. In the summer of 1915 in Chicago, many traveled to celebrate the 15th anniversary of emancipation (1). Carter G. Woodson championed the Negro History Week in 1926. This week was chosen to embrace those who played a notable role in advancing black history: Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass (1). This week was dedicated to the study of African American History. As the years went on many championed Negro History Month in their area, after 50 years the Negro History Week became Black History Month in 1976 (1).

The theme for Black Heritage and History Experience 2023 is "[Black Resistance](#)". We will continue to challenge systematic injustice to create a better tomorrow for all.

Chinese New Years

Chinese New Year also known as Lunar New Year has been celebrated for decades. The earliest indication of the lunar calendar as in the 14th century B.C. during the Shang Dynasty reign (2). Chinese New Year is observed during the new moon and can last up to 15 days. Throughout the years, the celebration has faced many changes from being abolished in 1912 to adopt the Gregorian calendar, to being outlawed in 1949 (2). Around the 20th century, leaders became more accepting of the celebration.

Although some traditions have adapted to the times, there are still some that still hold strong. Some of those traditions are the use of red lanterns and gifting red envelopes with money. 2023 is the year of the Rabbit. Those born in the year of the rabbit are considered to be clever and energetic.

Check out our upcoming events [here!](#)

Affirmative Action is more than a diverse recruitment plan at Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College. This month, we will explore the various stakeholder groups that are covered under our affirmative action plans and how they all contribute to our success as an equal opportunity employer. The positionality of the stakeholder roles below may differ from the titles held on campus by these individuals and are defined by Minnesota Management and budget and the Minnesota State system. This article attempts to increase the competency of institutional stakeholders by defining all roles that have responsibility in making our communities more inclusive and diverse.

The President of Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College

The President is responsible for establishing an Affirmative Action Plan, including goals, timetables, and compliance with all federal and state laws and regulations. Quarterly, the President reports progress in meeting affirmative action goals and objectives to the Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB). The President, through the Commissioner of MMB, will report annually to the Governor and the Legislature the progress in meeting affirmative action goals and objectives. The President is accountable directly to the Chancellor of Minnesota State and indirectly to the Commissioner of MMB for affirmative action matters.

Affirmative Action Officer

The Affirmative Action Officer is directly responsible for developing, coordinating, implementing, and monitoring the affirmative action plan. The Affirmative Action Officer is accountable to the President of Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College for program impacts and for ongoing program activities and direction. The Affirmative Action Officer oversees the administration of ADA Title II, manages diversity and inclusion initiatives, and other equal opportunity related matters. In addition, the AAO ensures that aggregate data and trends of complaints of illegal discrimination in hiring are provided and shared with the Human Resources Director on a quarterly basis.

Affirmative Action Designee

A designee is responsible for the implementation of the institutional Affirmative Action Plan. East designee is directly accountable to the Affirmative Action Officer for matters relating to affirmative action. The Designee is accountable to the Campus Diversity Officer on matters pertaining to Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity. The Campus Human Resources Officer is accountable to the President of Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College, while Human Resources staff are accountable to the Campus Human Resources Officer.

Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinators

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title I Coordinator henceforth ADA Coordinator is responsible for ensuring compliance with the ADA Title I - Employment, in accordance with the ADA as amended, and the Minnesota Human Rights Act. The ADA Coordinator is accountable to the Campus Human Resources Officer and Affirmative Action Officer.

The ADA Coordinator is responsible for ensuring compliance with the ADA Title II - Public Services, in accordance with the ADA as amended, and the Minnesota Human Rights Act. This responsibility includes student and public requests for accommodation. The ADA Title II Coordinator is accountable to the Affirmative Action Officer.

All Employees

All employees are responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with the State of Minnesota's policy of equal employment opportunity. This includes refraining from any actions that would subject any employee to negative treatment on the basis of race, creed, color, sex (including pregnancy, child birth, and related medical condition), national origin, age, marital status, familial status, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, veteran status, reliance on public assistance, membership or activity in a local human rights commission, religion, political opinions, or affiliations. Protected class also includes genetic information for employees. Employees who believe they have been subjected to such discrimination or harassment are encouraged to use the college and university complaint procedures.

Title IX, a federal law that prohibits discrimination based on sex, provides protections nationwide to protect the rights of students who are lactating, a condition related to pregnancy. All schools, colleges, and universities that receive Federal funds must comply with Title IX. Other laws exist but may not apply in every state. Educational systems and employers have not consistently complied with the mandates.

Through Title IX, there are protections for pregnant and parenting students in educational programs and activities. Schools must find ways to help students who need to breastfeed or manage lactation on campus. This is no different than allowing other students with temporary medical conditions to miss class time to address their needs.

Barriers such as the lack of lactation locations or milk storage may negatively impact choice to assert rights. Many who lactate or breastfeed have been directed to a public restroom or another public space. Expressing milk is a medical procedure and a source of food. This is not just uncomfortable, it is unsanitary. Both campuses in Bemidji provide private spaces for lactation purposes.

According to the [American Civil Liberties Union \(ACLU\)](#), many low-income and marginalized individuals who breastfeed are faced with institutional and structural barriers and intersecting discrimination that hinders the exercise of rights. Concerns for retaliation, reduced hours, inadequate progress in classes, job loss, shaming, and harassment also prevent exercise of this right. Concerns are heightened exponentially for transgender and non-binary individuals.

February, National Black History Celebration, is an opportunity to highlight how this civil and human right continues to be infringed upon.

Most likely to be the sole economic support for their family, Black women participate in the workforce at a rate higher than all other women. Greater pressure to return to work or school earlier than anyone else in settings that offer less flexibility, economic stability, and benefits compound barriers.

Health provider advocacy is critical to the success of extending access to rights by outlining pregnant or parenting related accommodations that are needed for students. Health care access inequities contribute to lower rates of breastfeeding for Black individuals. Amplifying concerns of inequitable access are the higher rates of maternal and infant mortality.

Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College assist individuals who are pregnant and parenting. In the coming months, clear lists of resources with resource maps and expanded website content will be made available.

Pregnant and parenting student rights under [Title IX](#) are broad. Physical accommodations, schedule accommodations, student choice, excusing absences, allowing make up assignments, protecting from harassment and discrimination, and preventing retaliation are just some of the protections that are required of education systems under law. Request for accommodation can be made through the Center for Civil Rights websites for both campuses.

If you are pregnant or parenting and need assistance, or know someone who does, contact the Title IX Coordinator for Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College regarding what can be done to support students.

Further information is available on how to [request assistance](#) or make a [complaint](#) of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

TIME FOR SELF CARE

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NEED TO KNOW RESOURCES

JOIN AN EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP

Please click the button below for the group you are interested in joining, or reach out to affirmativeaction@bemidjistate.edu with any additional questions:

[2SLGBTQIA+](#)[Employees of Color](#)[Employees with Disabilities](#)[Employees with Young Children](#)

CONTACT US

[Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)



Scan the code or [click here](#).

We recognize that mental health is just as important as physical health. Check out Therapy Assistance Online (TAO)!

Scan the code or [click here](#).



Issues with discrimination or sexual violence? Visit the Center for Civil Rights: [Investigation Office](#).

Scan the code or [click here](#).

Donate to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Today.

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Together We Can! Together we will!

Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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