

# MEDLEY

- a potpourri of diverse talent

March 2019

## Vision Statement

**To create a diverse workforce and promote a positive work environment where all employees are respected and valued for their contributions.**

USDA-ARS-Midwest Area Diversity and Equal Opportunity Council (DEOC) members:

- Kelli Adkins, Co-Chair, Lexington & Bowling Green, KY  
Carl Bernacchi, Chair, Urbana, IL  
Vicky Brooks, Peoria, IL  
Karen Cichy, East Lansing, MI  
Sherry Egbert, West Lafayette, IN  
Dennis Halterman, Madison, WI  
Bruce Hibbard, Columbia, MO  
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Shawn Rohloff, Morris, MN  
Kun Xiao, St. Paul, MN  
Paul Scott, Employee Engagement Council  
Sherri Buxton, Peoria, IL, MWA Office Advisor; Employee Engagement Council

## Message from MWA DEOC Chair

*Submitted by Carl Bernacchi*

The members of the DEOC are particularly excited to circulate this issue of the Medley to the MWA. As with all issues, we sought to highlight many of the spectacular and exciting activities and people within the MWA. We additionally wanted to highlight in this issue a small sampling of the fantastic diversity of people within the MWA. We felt that a celebration of cultural diversity can best be highlighted through articles related to cultural celebrations, including a recipe I look forward to trying! This issue of the Medley was intended to be circulated closer to the holiday season, but the shutdown slowed our progress. While we are a bit farther removed from the holidays than we would like, it is a fantastic opportunity to look back on the previous holiday season and enjoy the stories and photos that encompass a small sampling of our wonderfully diverse colleagues. Happy Reading!

## Aaron Lewis is Going to Purdue

*Submitted by David Stanley*

MEDLEY readers may recall Aaron Lewis, an undergraduate student in Lincoln University, an 1890 Land Grant Institution located in Jefferson City, MO, who worked in the Biological Control of Insects Research Laboratory (BCIRL) through two University of Missouri (MU) Summer Undergraduate Research Internship programs, 2017 and 2018. These are powerful programs that attract over 90 undergraduates each summer. The students live on campus and work on a very wide variety of projects throughout MU. Their experiences go beyond research, with planned activities, including evening seminars on professional development and social programming to facilitate connections among interns.

The success of the MU program emerges from connecting students with appropriate research programs, where they become deeply engaged. Dr. Moushumi Paul, Scientific Advisor in the ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity worked with Research Leader David Stanley to recruit Aaron into internships, where he developed a competitive posture relative to veterinary school applications. The MU program also requires funding, and for both summers, Drs. Stanley and Paul partnered to support Aaron's internships. The Outreach Branch of the Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity is staffed by Tracey Troutman (Branch Manager), Debra Owens-Coleman, Program Analyst, and Dr. Paul. One of their roles is helping students link with ARS programs. Aaron is a USDA/1890 National Scholar sponsored by ARS through the Office. This valuable program is part of the USDA's support of 1890's Land Grant Institutions and also a portal to meaningful USDA careers.

It is a pleasure to let you know Aaron recently reached his goal of acceptance into the Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine, a highly rigorous and competitive program. Please join the ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity and the Midwest Area in congratulating Aaron on this exceptional achievement.

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## Volunteering to be a Member of the MWA DEOC

*Submitted by Bruce Hibbard  
Research Entomologist and Acting Research Leader  
Plant Genetics Research Unit, Columbia, MO*

Shortly after accepting the role of Acting Research Leader for the Plant Genetics Research Unit last October, there was a call to identify someone from the Columbia, MO location to replace a departing member of USDA-ARS Midwest Area Diversity and Equal Opportunity Council (DEOC). I thought that serving on the council would force me to consciously consider ways to broaden my thinking and perhaps help me learn new ways to diversify the unit, so I decided to volunteer. Once on the committee, I learned that one task of serving on the DEOC is to contribute to the MEDLEY. For the past several months I have pondered how to put together a story on the value of diversity. With the deadline approaching, I decided it was time to write.

During my ARS career, I have had individuals from the Philippines, China, Nigeria, Germany, Switzerland, Egypt, France, India, Vietnam, and Brazil in my lab. Current lab members include individuals from China, Vietnam, and Brazil. Most of the best ideas I have had in my scientific career of been a result of discussions with other scientists. As with other areas of life, talking through a research problem will often help you create a path to solving the issue. Including individuals with diverse backgrounds from different parts of the world in these discussions will certainly bring perspectives that you would not have thought of and has helped enrich the paths forward for my lab group.

This diversity has helped not only in the spectrum of ideas, but also in the spectrum of workplace attitudes. During the summer months we evaluate corn for rootworm damage by digging corn roots from the field, washing all the soil from the roots, and evaluating insect damage. At times, this could reach more than 15,000 corn roots per year. The climate is usually hot and the work messy. When we do this, we make sure everyone including the SY, postdocs, graduate students, technicians, and hourly workers are involved in digging the roots. In such situations, diversity may not seem to add value, but esprit de corps certainly does and I believe that the different perspectives of the task at hand have added to the esprit de corps of our group as a whole. This is most apparent as we approach the end of the task. Many of the hourly workers we have hired over the years have had farm backgrounds. It can lead to an interesting dynamic, but I truly believe that the mix of international, rural, and misc. U.S. backgrounds is helpful and makes mundane tasks at hand more interesting for those involved as they learn about each other's cultures.

To be honest, I haven't spent much time thinking about diversity during most of my life. I certainly was not raised to be purposely prejudiced in any way, but where I grew up (rural Minnesota), there were not many people with diverse backgrounds. Within the past few years, events triggering a change in leadership at the University of Missouri helped make me more aware of continuing issues in the United States. I began thinking about these issues from my own, limited perspective and realized how narrow my perspective is. For this reason, in part, I volunteered to serve on the DEOC. It is my hope with continued exposure to new ideas that I and others that I work with can begin to broaden our thinking to include perspectives beyond our own.

## Treaty Reserved Rights Presentation

*Submitted by Kun Xiao*

On November 15, 2018, the St. Paul Location invited Marne Kaeske, Cultural Preservation Specialist and Head of the Education and Outreach Division for the 1854 Treaty Authority. The Treaty Authority Division initiatives include developing the organization's communications, providing public outreach to dispel misconceptions about usufructuary treaty rights harvest, and creating the foundation for tribal youth and families to invest in traditional and adapted practices integral to tribal subsistence culture.

The 1854 Treaty Authority is an inter-tribal natural resource management agency that manages the off-reservation hunting, fishing and gathering rights of the Bois Forte Band and the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, in the lands ceded to the United States government under the treaty of 1854. Ms. Kaeske reviewed the history of treaties with the Chippewa in the Western Great Lakes that set the stage for subsistence harvest management in Northeastern Minnesota. Her work is very multi-dimensional and hard to fit into an hour, but very interesting and enjoyed by the group.

**Here are some online resources:**

<http://www.1854treatyauthority.org/>

[https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/laws\\_treaties/1854/litigation.html](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/aboutdnr/laws_treaties/1854/litigation.html)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1854\\_Treaty\\_Authority](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1854_Treaty_Authority)



## Vegetable Crops Research Unit Educates the Public on Work to Improve Our Food

*Submitted by Dennis Halterman*

Over the past few months members of the Vegetable Crops Research Unit in Madison, WI have participated in outreach events to communicate their science to the general public. In October, several members of the VCRU participated in the four-day-long Wisconsin Science Festival. The audience included people of all ages and backgrounds from around the state. Attendees were able to gain knowledge of where or how their food is grown, and the impact that ARS research has on ensuring a sustainable supply of healthy fruits and vegetables for their meals.

To lead things off, ARS Ecologist Johanne Brunet gave a brief presentation on bees at the sponsor's luncheon, organized for the Wisconsin Science festival sponsors and steering committee.

During the Festival's Discovery Expo, VCRU participants hosted three hands-on exhibits. Prickly cucumbers from India, purple potatoes from Peru, yellow carrots from North Africa, and cranberries from Wisconsin were just a few examples of the "wild" vegetables demonstrated at one of the science stations. This station was focused on research to identify important traits in wild crop relatives and incorporate these traits into superior germplasm.

Also included in the Festival was a station on the role of insect pollinators in crop production, organized by the Brunet lab group.

The third experiment station allowed participants to learn about cranberries and how Research Geneticist Juan Zalapa and Entomologist Shawn Steffan work to improve cranberry production using genetics and integrated pest management.

On the last day of the Festival, Dr. Brunet, together with Eugene Woller from Gentle Breeze Honey, gave a presentation on honey bees and honey, and held a honey tasting event.

In November, Research Geneticists Dennis Halterman and Shelley Jansky, Research Physiologist Paul Bethke, technician Andy Hammernik, and student Eric Larson participated in STEAM Point Day at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. This hands-on classroom exercise let 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders learn more about research to improve potato varieties. Dr. Halterman led the students in an investigation into resistance and susceptibility to Potato Virus Y. Based on their observations, the students predicted whether plants were infected with virus and then tested their predictions using immunological detection.

Drs. Jansky and Bethke discussed how cold storage of potatoes leads to increased sugar production and why this impacts potato chip color. Students were able to predict chip color based on the sugar content of the potatoes (using diabetic test strips) and then fried the potatoes to determine if their predictions were correct.

Members of the VCRU have participated regularly in all of these events for the past few years. Although the demonstrations and exhibits change slightly each time they are presented, members of the VCRU have consistently found them to be excellent opportunities to engage the community and provide hands-on experiences that highlight the research priorities of the USDA.



From left to right: Postdoc Fabiana Fragoso (seated), ARS entomologist Johanne Brunet, ARS technician Zachary Diamond and student Matthew Hetherington explain the importance of insect pollinators in gene flow within populations and in the production of many food crops.

## Vegetable Crops Research Unit Educates the Public on Work to Improve Our Food



ARS technician Eric Wiesman and student Jessica Rohde demonstrate how to extract DNA from cranberries at the Wisconsin Science Festival.



Drs. Jansky and Bethke fry potatoes to demonstrate how high sugar content leads to dark potato chips.



Dr. Halterman leads students in a discussion on phenotypic differences between PVY infected and non-infected potato plants.



ARS technician Andy Hammernik and ARS postdoc Nathan Butler teach students about "wild" potatoes, cucumbers, and carrots and how they are used in breeding new varieties.

## Christmas and New Year Celebrations and Traditions in the Philippines

Submitted by Mila P. Hojilla-Evangelista

Christmas and New Year are highly anticipated holidays in the Philippines. In most families, the excitement starts to build up at the onset of the -ber months. Given that the Philippines is a predominantly Catholic country (80 % of the population), several customs and traditions are influenced by the Christian faith.



The Christmas lantern, called **parol**, decorates the windows or doors of houses and buildings everywhere in the country during the Christmas season. The **parol** is star-shaped and made from bamboo strips and colorful paper or capiz shells. It represents the biblical Star of Bethlehem and supposedly guides the folks who attend the **Simbang Gabi** (“Night Worship”).

**Simbang Gabi**, also known as **Misa de Gallo** (“Mass of Roosters”) is actually nine consecutive pre-dawn Masses that start on December 16; the last one on December 24 is held at midnight. This custom heightens the anticipation for the Nativity and sharpens the focus on the essence of Christmas. Many Filipinos believe that their petitions will be granted if they complete the Simbang Gabi. On the way home from the Mass, churchgoers usually buy and eat freshly cooked **puto bumbong** or **bibingka**, tasty traditional rice cakes for Christmas season.



**Noche Buena** (“Good Night”) is the Christmas Eve family dinner around midnight or after attending the midnight Mass. Foods commonly served are ham, queso de bola (edam cheese ball), fruit salad, leche flan, rice noodle or pasta dish, and various drinks. Gifts may be opened after the dinner. On the morning of **Pasko** (Christmas day), families who did not go to the midnight Mass, like those with young children, start the day with gift-opening. After breakfast, they attend a Mass in their best or new clothes and then gather in the home of the patriarch/matriarch of the family. They also visit other relatives and godparents in town. As a sign of respect, elderly and older relatives are greeted by reaching for their hand and pressing one’s forehead against the hand, a practice called **pag-mamano**. The senior relative then gives a blessing, followed by the **pamasko** (“Christmas gift”). The rest of the day is spent eating and relaxing with family.

**Media Noche** (“Middle Night”) is the family dinner at the stroke of the New Year. The meal must have noodles (folk belief: for long life to family members), glutinous rice cakes (for family unity) and 12 different round fruits (for good fortune for all 12 months). Other practices, such as making loud noises, opening all windows and doors, turning on all lights, keeping the rice/sugar/flour bins fully stocked, not spending money on New Year’s Day, are all related to the belief of “banishing the bad and welcoming the good” at the start of a new year.

**Maligayang Pasko at Masaganang Bagong Taon!** (“Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year!”)

## Bicol Express Recipe—Filipino Dish

*Submitted by Mila P. Hojilla-Evangelista*



Bicol Express is a popular Filipino dish. It is a spicy stew made of bite sized pieces of pork with long chilies, coconut milk, shrimp paste, onions, and garlic.

This dish was named after the passenger train service from Manila to the Bicol region in the Philippines, known for its spicy cuisine.

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 50 minutes

Total Time: 1 hour

### Ingredients

- 2 lbs pork belly, cut in bite sized strips
- 3 cups coconut milk
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- ½ cup shrimp paste
- 6 pcs thai chili or serrano pepper
- 3 tbsp ginger, minced
- 1 medium onion, minced
- 2 tbsp oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

### Instructions

- Heat pan and pour in cooking oil.
- Saute the garlic, onion and ginger.
- Add the pork and continue cooking for 5-7 minutes, or until the color becomes brown.
- Put in the shrimp paste and chili or serrano pepper. Stir.
- Pour the coconut milk. Bring to a boil. Simmer for 40 minutes or until the pork is tender.
- Add salt and ground black pepper to taste
- Serve hot and enjoy!

This food is rich, creamy, spicy, and delicious! Pork belly, pork shoulder, or pork roast can be used in this recipe, depending on how fatty you'd like the pork. Fish sauce or soy sauce may be used if shrimp paste is not available. You can adjust the spiciness by adding more or putting less of the chilies. If extra mild is preferred, you may deseed the chilies before adding them to the dish. Serve with steamed rice for a hearty meal! Enjoy!

<https://panlasangpinoy.com>  
<https://www.kawalingpinoy.com>  
<https://salu-salo.com/>



## A Sample of Brazilian Culture

Submitted by Dr. Márcio Nunes\*

Brazilian culture has been influenced by the various ethnic groups who formed the Brazilian people. Thus, it is very rich and diverse. It would be impossible to cover the subject of Brazilian cultural heritage in a short document, so only a few examples are given here.

Of all the Brazilian traditions, the Carnival is one of the biggest popular celebrations in Brazil. Every year, people from around the world gather to watch the huge organized parades of Samba Groups, performing in the Sambódromos<sup>1</sup> of Rio de Janeiro. The Carnival parades are made up of huge floats<sup>2</sup>, musicians and dancers who wear elaborate costumes (Fig. 1). Rio de Janeiro holds one of the most well-known Carnival parties. It features more than 100 block parades. The celebration is the culmination of months of preparation and brings many different types of people together. Besides official parades, Brazil offers plenty of other options to enjoy the Carnival. The Carnival fans can participate in large street dancing parades or follow a Trio Elétrico<sup>3</sup> through the streets of cities, dancing and singing while wearing funny costumes (Fig. 2). Although the Carnival was introduced by the Portuguese, the Brazilian people developed it to become the huge and unique celebration that it is today. This popular party runs for six days, ending on Ash Wednesday, 40 days before the Easter holiday. More than a party, the industry that has developed around Carnival generates thousands of dollars, employing many people.

New Year's Eve is also a traditional celebration in Brazil. Every year, people from all over the world come to Brazil to experience the New Year's Reveillon event. As it happens during the summer, the biggest parties occur on the beaches, where people gather to watch fireworks. The tradition is to wear white, as it portrays the welcoming of the New Year with expectations and hopes for peace and prosperity. During the 2018 New Year's Eve party at Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, three million people gathered, and 25 tons of fireworks were set off during a span of 17 minutes (Fig. 3).

The Brazilian calendar for celebrations also includes several Christian holidays. From a national perspective, the most popular ones involve festivities and peregrination. The manifestation of faith is the main purpose of these celebrations. The Nossa Senhora Aparecida, who is considered the principal patroness of Brazil, and Good Friday are good examples. On November 2 each year, the holiday of Finados (Day of the Dead) is celebrated. People go to cemeteries and churches to pray, leave flowers and light candles in honor of their loved ones (Fig. 4). Among other religious holidays, Easter and Christmas are celebrated as elsewhere in the world.

As Brazil is a large country (fifth biggest in the world), its culture is very heterogeneous among the different regions. In the North, cultural celebrations are strongly influenced by the Native Indians. Boi-Bumba is an example of a popular festival in that region. During the event, people wear costumes and dance to celebrate the story of a bull that comes back to life, thanks to the intervention of the Pajé, a Native Indian Wizard. In the South, the influence of Italian and German immigrants is evident. The Oktoberfest is an example of a festival introduced by Germans. It happens in middle October in several cities of the region. Annually, thousands of people from all over Brazil and also from abroad gather for the party. During several days of celebration, there are musical performances, dances, and competitions, as well as typical German cuisine, including different kinds of beer (Fig. 5). The Oktoberfest of Blumenau (a city located in southern Brazil) is the largest among all the Americas, and the second largest in the world, behind the original celebration in Munich, Germany.

<sup>1</sup> The Sambadrome is the purpose-built stadium designed specifically to host the annual parade of Samba Groups during the Brazilian Carnival.

<sup>2</sup> A float is a decorated platform, either built on a vehicle like a truck or towed behind one, and is a component of many festive parades, such as the Carnival in Brazil.

<sup>3</sup> Trio Elétrico feature trucks equipped with speakers and a platform for musicians to play music.

\*This article was developed by Dr. Márcio Nunes, who is a Post-doctoral Research Associate at the National Laboratory for Agriculture and Environment in Ames, Iowa. He came to the NLAE from southern Brazil in April of 2018. In collaboration with Dr. Cindy Cambardella, his research focuses on soil health.



Fig. 1. Rio Carnival: night view of Sambodrome (A), float (B), musicians and rhythmic dancers (C) and dancers (D) in elaborate costumes.



Fig. 2. A large number of people following a Trio Elétrico (A) and wearing costumes (B) through the street during the Carnival of Brazil.



Fig. 3. New Year's Eve at Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Fig. 4. The holiday of Finados (Day of the Dead) in Brazil.



Fig. 5. People in a parade (A), enjoying their beverages (B), participating in the meter glass competition © and in a dance performance (D) during the Oktoberfest celebration in Southern Brazil.

### Cereal Disease Research Unit Gathering in Celebration of Family Heritage and Traditions



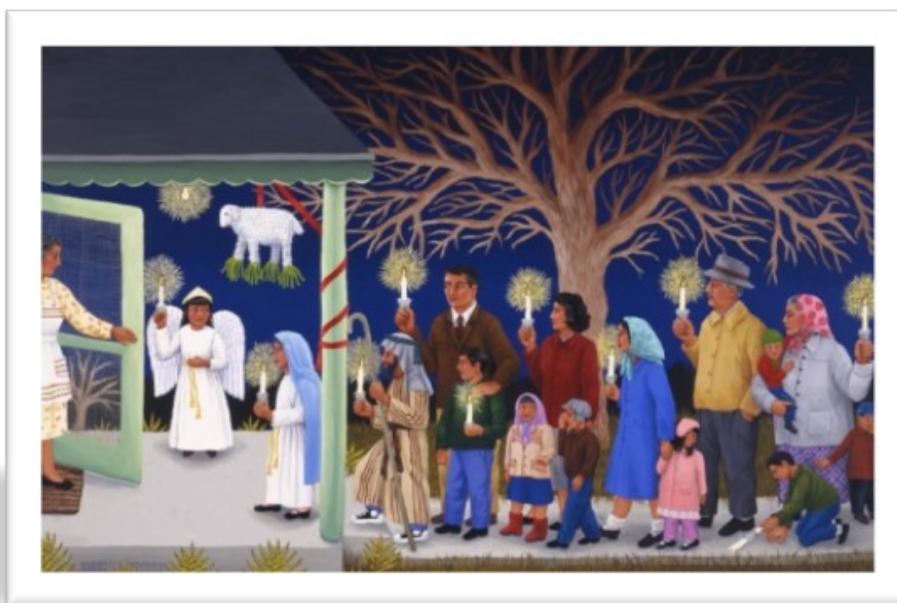
Staff at the Cereal Disease Research Unit located in St. Paul, Minnesota gathered with family and collaborators on December 14th, 2018 for the 48th Annual Holiday Celebration at their present location to share dishes and relate stories representing family heritage and traditions.

## Las Posadas

Submitted by Luis R. Martinez  
SDRU, Columbus, OH

As a young boy growing up in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, I was fortunate to be able to experience a unique blend of cultures created by the diverse mix of people that settled the region. The “Valley”, as it is known locally, is located at the southernmost tip of Texas, bordered by the Gulf of Mexico to the east and the Rio Grande River to the south. The geographical location of the Valley allowed for a meld of American and Mexican foods, customs and traditions. One such tradition for which I have the fondest of memories is that of *Las Posadas*.

Las Posadas (Spanish for “the inns”), is a 9-day Mexican tradition that re-enacts the biblical journey of Mary and Joseph and their search of a safe place, or “inn,” to stay before the birth of Jesus. Typically, different families in a neighborhood will take turns hosting a Posada at their home each night, starting on the 16th of December and finishing on the 24th. The host family act as the innkeepers. The neighborhood children and adults are the pilgrims (“Peregrinos”), who walk from house to house, holding candles and singing a traditional song about Mary and Joseph searching for lodging. At one house after the other, they are turned away (also in song), until the weary travelers reach the designated site where Mary and Joseph are finally recognized and allowed to enter.



I will always cherish my memories of Las posadas. Friends and family would process behind neighborhood teens dressed as Mary and Joseph riding an actual donkey. At the conclusion of the re-enactment, the host family would open up their home and the party would begin. People would gather inside the house to cook, eat and drink. The wonderful smell of tamales, cinnamon-chocolate, warm buñuelos, and pan dulce (sweet bread) would fill the house with aromatic happiness. After a wonderful meal it was time to break the piñata, which of course meant more candy! As the evening went on, the adults would continue laughing and singing inside while children ran and played outside. At the time, I didn't realize how much this simple re-enactment brought the neighborhood together thus creating a strong community in which we all knew and looked after one another. Yes., cherished memories. I consider myself fortunate to have the opportunity to experience such cultural traditions and will always treasure my memories of growing up in “The Valley”.

## Dashain—Nepal

*Submitted by Dr. Hari Karki  
VCRU, Madison, WI*

**Dashain** is the most important festival of Nepal. It is celebrated by the Hindus, Buddhist, Kirats and other ethnics people in most part of the Nepal and some part of India, Bhutan and Myanmar. It is the most anticipated and longest festival in Nepal which is celebrated for 15 days. Mostly, Dashain falls in the month of Aswin (September/October), starting from the Shukla Paksha (bright lunar fortnight) and ending on Purnima (the full moon). Among the fifteen celebrated days of Dashain, the tenth day is the most important day which is also known as Dashami. During that day, Tika (a mixture of rice, curd and vermillion) is prepared and elders put this tika and jamara (barley grown on dark on the first day of Dashain) on the forehead of younger relatives to bless them with happiness and prosperity for upcoming years. Tika ceremony continues for 5 days in which families and relatives visit to their elder people home in exchange of gifts. This ritual of taking tika from all of the elder relatives helps in the renewal love, respect and harmony among them. Probably, this may be the reason why Dashain is celebrated with in such a enthusiastic manner throughout the country.



Figure: Tika and jamara.  
Photo credit: Nepal advise

**We'd love to highlight your Outreach event or share your story.**

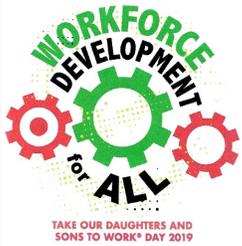
**Contributions can be sent to your location ODEO representative  
listed on the front page below the vision statement.**

## Special Emphasis Programs/Observances/Resources and Information

Special Emphasis Programs (SEPs) are an integral part of the overall civil rights, human resources and program delivery functions. The purpose of the SEPs is to provide oversight, guidance, direction, enforcement and assistance to enhance opportunities for women, minorities, and people with disabilities in all employment and program delivery activities.

**Employment activities:** Recruitment, hiring, promotions, separations, awards, training, or any other employment action which impacts on the inclusion of and equal opportunity for women, minorities, and people with disabilities.

**Program delivery activities:** These activities include outreach, training, public notification, program accessibility or any system, practice or procedure or other activity which increases the knowledge of and participation by women, minorities, and people with disabilities.



**Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day, April 25<sup>th</sup>**

**National Theme:** “Workforce Development for All”

**Resources & Information:** [Resources & Information: Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Foundation Bright Ideas Guide](#)

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Foundation <http://www.daughtersandsonstowork.org/>

Phone: (800) 676-7780; Email: [todastw@mindspring.com](mailto:todastw@mindspring.com)



**Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, Month of May**

**Resources & Information:** Federal Asian Pacific American Heritage Council (FAPAC) <http://www.fapac.org/>

Library of Congress: Exhibits and Collections (<https://asianpacificheritage.gov/exhibits-and-collections/>)

Audio and Video (<https://asianpacificheritage.gov/audio-and-video/>)

Images (<https://asianpacificheritage.gov/images/>)

Asian Pacific American Network in Agriculture (APANA) <http://apana.annuk.com/>



**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride, Month of June**

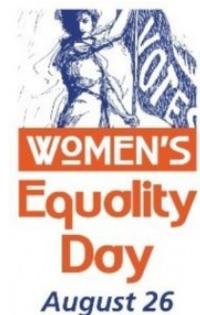
**National Theme:** “Millions of Moments of Pride”

**Resources & Information:** [Straight for Equality](#)

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays ([PFLAG Diverse and Inclusive World](#))

Find a Chapter (<https://pflag.org/find-a-chapter>)

The Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/lgbt/>



**Women's Equality Day, August 26, 2018**

**National Theme:** “Celebrating Women's Right to Vote. Expanding Opportunities to All”

**Resources & Information:**

Ms. Foundation for Women: <http://forwomen.org/?gclid=CNXqzdXvy8MCFYdj7AodI0cAmw>

Equal Means Equal: (<http://equalmeansequal.com/topics/>)

National Women's History Project [www.nwhp.org](http://www.nwhp.org)



Additional resources for diversity awareness material and ideas for special observances (catalog, pins, videos, etc.) are available from the following resources:

**ARS EEO Video Library:** <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/files/ARS%20Video%20Library%20Catalog1.pdf>

**Diversity Store:** [www.diversitystore.com](http://www.diversitystore.com); Phone: 800-200-5964; Email – [hmsdc@aol.com](mailto:hmsdc@aol.com)

**Smithsonian:** <http://www.si.edu/>; Phone: 202-633-1000; Email: [info@si.edu](mailto:info@si.edu)

**USDA Department-wide Monthly Observances – Links for Websites:** <http://www.dm.usda.gov/employ/observances.html>

Observance events/activities should be conducted in a most cost-efficient manner.



**You can earn credit for diversity training when you participate in a Special Emphasis Observance event (i.e., Women's Equality Day, Veterans Day, etc.).**

- ◆ How? There are two options, as applicable:
  1. Record your own learning in AgLearn if the learning item allows users to do so upon completion of the learning item. Access AgLearn and go to Record Learning.
  2. Contact your Designated Location AgLearn Administrator or Debra Owens-Coleman, Acting MWA Outreach, Diversity and Equal Opportunity Program, at [debra.owenscoleman@ars.usda.gov](mailto:debra.owenscoleman@ars.usda.gov) or 979-260-9416.

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**REE Mission Area EEO Counseling:** 202-720-3410, 800-340-4289, TDD: 202-720-3303

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/AboutUs/docs.htm?docid=23089>; Axon: <https://axon.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/Pages/Home.aspx>

**Cooperative Resolution Program:** Jeff Schmitt; 301-504-1352, [jeff.schmitt@ars.usda.gov](mailto:jeff.schmitt@ars.usda.gov) or [coopres@ars.usda.gov](mailto:coopres@ars.usda.gov)

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/odeo/coopres>; Axon: <https://axon.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/Pages/Home.aspx>

**Reasonable Accommodation Program:** Tonya B. Morris, 301-504-4339, [tonya.b.morris@ars.usda.gov](mailto:tonya.b.morris@ars.usda.gov)

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/AboutUs/docs.htm?docid=23085>; Axon: <https://axon.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/Pages/Home.aspx>

**Outreach and Recruitment Branch Area Contact:** Debra Owens-Coleman, 979-260-9416, [debra.owens-coleman@ars.usda.gov](mailto:debra.owens-coleman@ars.usda.gov).

<https://www.ars.usda.gov/AboutUs/docs.htm?docid=23072>; Axon: <https://axon.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/Pages/Home.aspx>

**Office of Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity (ODEO) Home Page:**

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/ODEO> Axon: <https://axon.ars.usda.gov/ODEO/Pages/Home.aspx>