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Citizens' Unity Commission -- Winter 2015

# Diversity MATTERS

## Hampton counts down to civility month: Reconnect to kind and considerate behaviors



It has become obvious that the more we become technically and social media-connected, the more *disconnected* we get from the basic values of kind and considerate behaviors.

In a recent study performed by the Public Agenda Research Group, nearly eight in 10 respondents agreed that lack of respect and courtesy is a serious national problem.

It's all too common now that children are affected by bullies in schools and neighborhoods; adults are losing sleep due to anger- and stress-filled workplaces, and even leaders in places of worship are finding it necessary to remind their congregations more and more of the virtues of kindness.

Through all this, there's something great in the works that will assist our community in combatting this common trend of insensitivity, thoughtlessness, and just plain rude behavior.

For International Civility Awareness Month, the CUC has teamed up with Image Design Consulting Company's Bliss Academy and the "Let's Be Civil" Campaign to host the **first annual Civility Day on Saturday, May 30, 2015** at the Boo Williams Sportsplex at 5 Armistead Pointe Parkway in Hampton.

The goals of the campaign are:

- To increase awareness of Civility in the workplace, home and community
- To bring developmental focus back to positive, traditional values
- To inspire and encourage the practice of respectful behavior in everyday life



Although May is months away, the Countdown begins on Wednesday, January 21, 2015 with the *100 Days of Civility*. During that time, there will be a series of activities and events throughout the community that will lead up to the large community event on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

“There’s something great in the works that will assist our community in combatting this common trend of insensitivity, thoughtlessness, and just plain rude behavior.”

The campaign is inspired by Dr. P.M. Forni and the Association of Image Consultants International (AICI) who, together in 2009, established Civility Awareness Month as an ongoing activity on Chase’s Calendar of Events.

Look for games, contests, and all sorts of family activities throughout the *100 Days of Civility*.

For more information, contact the Citizens’ Unity Commission at 727-728-3279.



# DIVERSITY COLLEGE

## January 22 – March 19 Register NOW

The college is a nine-week course of diversity education that concentrates on diversity in contemporary workplaces and in our community. Class sessions include diversity 101, mixing and managing four generations, navigating gender issues and disability awareness.

Register now for classes: January 22 – March 19: Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. and April 16 – June 11: Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. Register at [hampton.gov/unity](http://hampton.gov/unity) or call (757) 728-3279.

## Nominations sought for Unity Awards

The Hampton Citizens’ Unity Commission is accepting nominations for its 2015 Unity Awards Program. This program recognizes individuals, initiatives, and organizations that have had a positive impact on diversity and inclusion in the City of Hampton. Awardees will be recognized at an awards reception, which will be held on Thursday June 11, 2015.

The deadline is midnight, May 1, 2015. Visit the Commission website at [www.hampton.gov/unity](http://www.hampton.gov/unity), or call Wanda Ferrell at 757-728-3279 for more information.



## HU Ambassadors

The Citizens’ Unity Commission is thrilled to announce a partnership project with the Hampton University Student Leaders. There will be 12 students selected to serve as Hampton University Diversity Ambassadors. These students will serve as advisory to both the Citizens’ Unity Commission Board and to the Citizens’ Engagement Advisory Commission on issues related to Diversity and Inclusion and they will assist in diversity awareness opportunities for the Hampton University Student Body.

Ms. Amber Smith and Ms. Faith Barrow-Hunte are the CUC/HU Student Coordinators who will present to the Commissions on a regular basis. On January 9, 2015, the Partnership sponsored an intra-racial dialogue for 120 HU student leaders. The event was an exploration into the diversity of appearances with a specific focus on Colorism...Dark Girls: An Exploration into the Future. The community facilitators who assisted with the small group discussions were: Phyllis Henderson, Visions 2000, inc., Dr. Jacqueline Jackson, Director, Girls Inc., Donna Speller Turner, NASA, Mary Stewart, Hampton Juvenile Justice Department, Lynette Petite, Hampton City Schools and Carol Dufrense, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church Social Ministry.

# Diversity Calendar

## February: African American History

An annual celebration to honor and commemorate important people and events in the history of African Americans. Begun in 1926 as “Negro History Week” by historian Carter G. Woodson to raise awareness, it was expanded in 1970 to a month.



**2 - Candlemas (Christian):** A Christian feast that commemorates the purification of the Virgin Mary and the presentation of the baby Jesus, the Christians’ Savior, in the Temple of Jerusalem 40 days after his birth.

**2 - Imbolc (sundown, Celtic, Pagan):** A festival celebrating the beginning of Spring. It signals the middle of the season long nights and anticipates the upcoming season of light. It is one of the Greater Sabbats in the Wiccan Year.

**4 - Tu B'Shevat (Jewish):** Marks the beginning of a “New Year for Trees.” It celebrates when the earliest-blooming trees in the Land of Israel emerge from their winter sleep and begin a new fruit-bearing cycle. Celebrated as Arbor Day by many secular Jews and organizations to promote environmental awareness.

**17 - Maha Shivaratri (Shiva’s Night, Hindu):** A festival honoring Lord Shiva, who, legend says, performed the Tāṇḍava nr̥tya or the dance of creation, preservation, and destruction. It’s celebrated with all-day fasting and an all-night-long vigil.

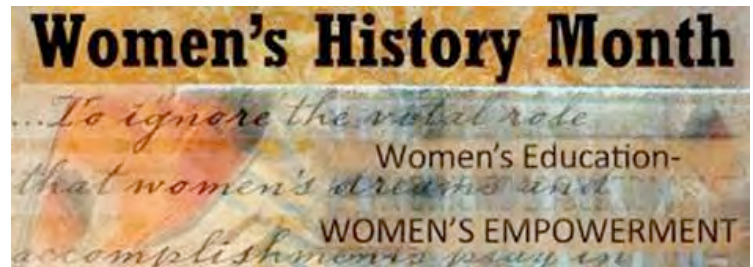
**17 - Shrove Tuesday (Christian):** Also known as Pancake Tuesday, Shrove Tuesday falls on the day before Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. It is a day to confess sins prior to entering the season of fasting, or giving up luxuries, often practiced during the season of Lent

**18 - Ash Wednesday (Christian):** Marks the first day of Lent, a 40-day liturgical period of prayer and fasting. It gets its name from the practice of placing ashes on the forehead as a reminder of mortality, sorrow for sins, change, and forgiveness. Dietary restrictions also apply on the Fridays throughout Lent, which lasts until the Saturday before Easter.

**26 - Ayyám-i-Há (Baha’i):** A festival lasting four to five days, marking the intercalary days in the 19-month Baha’i calendar, allowing for the synchronization with the solar year and leap years. It is a period of hospitality, charity, and gift giving.

## March: Women’s History Month

A time to celebrate women and promote equality among the genders. Women’s History Month has its origins dating back to 1909 with the first National Women’s Day in February of that year. The first Women’s History Week was observed in 1978 in California and by 1981 it had become a national event in 1987. Congress extended it for the entire month of March.



**5 - Purim (Jewish):** A joyous commemoration of the deliverance the Jews of Persia in the sixth century BCE from a plot by Haman, the king’s advisor, to annihilate them.

**6 - Hola Mahalla (Sikh):** A week long sporting event consisting of camping out and enjoying various displays of fighting prowess and bravery, followed by kirtan (a type of meditation), music and poetry.

**6 - Holi (Festival of Colors, Hindu, Sikh):** Celebration of spring throughout Northern India that is a time of fun followed by relaxation.

**19 - St. Joseph’s Day (Christian):** An international festival honoring St. Joseph, husband of the Virgin Mary and foster father of Jesus

**20 - Celtic (Pagan):** Ostara occurs on this day in the Northern Hemisphere; in the Southern Hemisphere today is Mabon.

**21 - Naw Ruz (Baha’i):** An ancient Persian festival that celebrates the Baha’i new year. it makes the end of the annual 19-day fast.

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# Opening the Book On Diversity: Book Group

Meets every 2nd  
Tuesday of the month at  
the Main Branch of the  
Hampton Public Library  
at 7 p.m.

## Citizens Unity Commission

### Staff

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Sarah Drew  
Joshua Head  
Kayla Hicks  
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Ruthann Kellum  
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Mei Stukes  
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### Youth Advisors

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Melia Miller  
Jasmine Thai Nguyen  
Joshua Simpson  
Rachelle Timpson  
Rena Timpson  
LaNyeshia Foster  
Nytrel Gas  
Darion Haynes



## Citizens' Unity Event and Meeting Calendar

### January

22 - March 19: HDC Level I, 1-3 p.m., 5th  
Floor CDD Conf Room

26 - Movie & Mic, Selma, Cinebistro, \$8.75

### February

10 - Open the Book on Diversity Book Group

12 - Movie & Mic, American Theatre, 7 p.m.,  
Remember the Titans. \$8/ticket

### March

10 - Open the Book on Diversity Book Group

12 - CUC Board Meeting

17 - CEAC Board Meeting