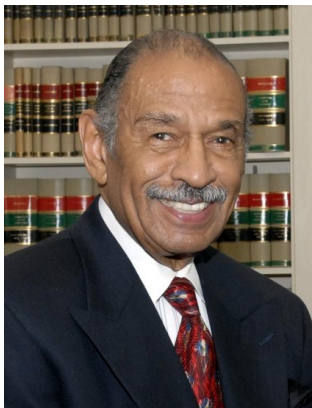


## A GLANCE AT DEIJ FOR THE NEW YEAR

### HOW MLK JR. DAY BECAME A NATIONAL HOLIDAY IN THE U.S.

January 20 reminds us to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his contributions to social justice and the civil rights movement in the United States. Many of us may already be familiar with his leadership in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, advocacy for nonviolent methods for protest, and “I Have a Dream” speech (1963), to name a few of his many accomplishments. However, the fight to create the national holiday in and of itself is less known.



John Conyers, a Democratic Congressman from Michigan, was the first to push for a national holiday, four days after Dr. King’s assassination in 1968. The first attempt to establish this national holiday failed to pass; despite many more attempts in the legislature, this continued until the early 1980s. Conyers had support from the Congressional Black Caucus, and they appeared to be gaining traction as they reached six million signatures in support of the federal holiday. This support culminated in 1983 during the March on Washington’s 20th anniversary and the 15th anniversary of Dr. King’s assassination. Finally, that year President Ronald Reagan signed the bill that designated the third Monday of every January as a federal holiday in honor of Dr. King.

However, even with official legislation signed in 1983, it wasn’t until 1986 that MLK Jr. Day was first celebrated as a federal holiday, and until 2000 that every state would observe it. And, after its first celebration, many southern states combined the day with holidays that celebrate Confederate leaders. Even today, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day still faces pushback in some states.

Today MLK Jr. Day is recognized as a National Day of Service! Honor MLK's legacy by planting trees with Keep Durham Beautiful (KDB). KDB strives to plant trees in underserved communities, which traditionally have had less access to green spaces, throughout the city.

# Becoming a Better Ally



With the New Year, people are apt to make long lists of resolutions, finding it difficult to stick to many of them. This year, we encourage you to be even more intentional with your goals, and ask that you consider how you can improve as an ally and

support those around you. Need inspiration? Here are some tips to get started on becoming a more aware ally to those who have been and still are marginalized and discriminated against.

- Listen to the thoughts, struggles, and experiences of others.
- Reflect on your own implicit biases and work to understand how they impact your thinking.
- Become more familiar with appropriate vocabulary.
- Ask others for help in conscientious and respectful ways.
- Recognize systematic inequalities and the impact of microaggressions.

## Allyship Abroad

India saw wide-spread protests led by college students against the passing of an act that will fast-track citizenship applications for refugees from all major religions except Islam. The law, along with a new citizenship test that has left two million people in danger of being declared stateless, has Indian Muslims fearing they are being targeted at a time when there has been a surge of anti-Muslim sentiment. India is just one of the many countries with similar protests against creeping authoritarianism and ethno-nationalism. It's a reminder that our commitment to inclusivity doesn't end at Nicholas School, it means continually supporting rights of people who are marginalized. This year let's ask ourselves - What does it mean to be a citizen of a democracy and what does a democracy demand of us?



To learn more, read: "Why people are protesting in India?" by the New York Times.

## Celebrating World Braille Day



Celebrated on 4 January, World Braille Day reminds us the importance of accessible communication.

Braille is a "tactile representation of alphabetic and numerical symbols using

six dots to represent each letter and number." It is used by blind and visually impaired people to read as well as allows these people the freedom of expression and social inclusion.

This additionally highlights the importance of increasing the accessibility of online publications as more people develop visual impairments. Incorporating alt text, image descriptions, and screen reader-friendly text are just some strategies to make online resources more widely available.

## RESOURCES:

### Allyship

- ABC's of Social Justice
- A Guide to Allyship
- Forbes: "Allyship – The Key to Unlocking the Power of Diversity"

### MLK Jr.

- a brief biography
- The Fight for MLK Jr. Day
- Pushback on MLK Jr. Day

### Braille

- World Braille Day
- Writing Alt Text and Image Descriptions

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND UPDATES:

### Black Images, Black Histories

- 1/17, 10 am-3 pm
- [Click here for more info](#)

### Honoring MLK Jr. by planting trees with Keep Durham Beautiful

- 1/20, 2-5 pm
- [Click here to register!](#)
- [and here to connect with other Nic School community members also going to the event!](#)

### Meta-wellness:

### Meditation Class inside the Art of Mental Health

- 1/24, 1-2 pm
- [Click here for more info](#)

## *Broadening the Tent*

All of us agree on the science of climate crisis. But around one-third Americans don't believe it's caused by humans.

Some of them might be our family members, friends, acquaintances. Let's engage in a hard conversation on climate crisis, here are some strategies for help:

Appeal to principles and values, not facts.

Relate to personal experiences – has the person felt the impact yet? If so, then lead with compassion and follow-up with scientific explanations.

Instead of looking for ah-ha or a gotcha moment, attempt small persuasive conversations over time.

