

# Belonging

the newsletter from the *FIRST* NC ED&I Team – July 2022

**Equity** – Treating everyone fairly, having equal opportunities and removing barriers

**Diversity** – The way we are all different

**Inclusion** – Creating space for everyone where differences are embraced

## Team Share - Optimum Innovator Awards

Altice USA through their Optimum and Suddenlink brands held its third annual Optimum Innovator Awards, further supporting FIRST Robotics and their commitment of supporting programs that inspire the next generation of innovators. This award recognizes the drive, hard work, and innovative approaches of teams both in and out of the FIRST Robotics program. This year, teams were recognized in categories such as: inclusion, excellence in technology, community engagement, inspiration, and social media.

North Carolina's own, Pitt Pirates Robotics (2642), from Greenville, was recognized as the 2022 winners for the inclusion award, demonstrating inclusiveness through connecting with others and embracing diversity. Their efforts can be shown through their initiatives with STEM Maker carts, Get the G.I.S.T. (Girls in Science and Technology) seminars, and their involvement in the FIRST Like A Girl and FIRST Ladies movements.

The Pitt Pirates are proud to share this accomplishment as a team and encourage others to adopt an atmosphere of inclusion wherever they may sail. Check out more on this award below:

<https://www.alticeusa.com/news/articles/feature/community/supporting-future-innovation-and-stem>

## From *FIRST*: Just in case you missed it! - 5 Ways To Be A Better Ally This Pride Month (And Every Month)

The global FIRST community is made up of diverse voices, perspectives, and minds. Within the FIRST community, there's not only a place for every student, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, disability, or background, but there's an opportunity to grow and shine collectively as we embrace our differences and use them as advantages to think differently about the world around us.

As we celebrate Pride Month this year, it's important for FIRST teams, mentors, coaches, volunteers, and employees to step back and look at how the outside world directly affects our friends, teammates, coworkers, and family. As a global community, when one of us endures hardship or injustices, we all feel it.

Here are a few simple ways we can celebrate Pride Month and Every Month by taking action to protect the wellbeing, rights, and livelihood of our LGBTQ+ FIRST community: Read more <https://community.firstinspires.org/five-ways-to-take-action-show-support-this-pride-month>

## July Events:

**July 2<sup>nd</sup> – Birthday of Thurgood Marshall (Black American):** well-known as a civil rights activist who served as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court

**July 6<sup>th</sup> – Birthday of 14th Dalai Lama (Tibetan):** Happy Birthday to a Nobel Peace Prize recipient and Tibet's leader in exile!

**July 6<sup>th</sup> – Birthday of Frida Kahlo (Women, Mexican):** one of the most recognizable painters of the 20th century

**July 7<sup>th</sup> – The Hajj (Islamic):** annual pilgrimage to Mecca, that all Muslims must take at least once in their lives

**July 18<sup>th</sup> – Birthday of Nelson Mandela (South African):** civil rights leader for South Africa, and the country's first Black president

**July 25<sup>th</sup> – Pioneer Day (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) observed:** Utah official holiday marking the arrival of LDS church founder Brigham Young arriving to the Salt Lake area

**July 26<sup>th</sup> – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** outlawed the discrimination against people with disabilities; ADA official US government site: <https://www.ada.gov/>; ADA 32nd anniversary toolkit: <https://adaanniversary.org/>

## Inspiration & Recognition Spotlight: Carlos Juan Finlay

Born: Camaguey, Cuba. December 3, 1833.



Cuban doctor and scientist Carlos Juan Finlay was a pioneer in the study of yellow fever. But back in 1881, when Finlay first presented his extensive research, suggesting that mosquitoes transmitted the disease to Havana's Academy of Sciences, he became a laughingstock. According to Finlay's son, the speech was greeted with initial silence, followed by "universal ridicule." It took another two decades before Finlay's hypothesis became widely accepted. During that time, Finlay didn't give up on his research. Instead, he spent those twenty years refining his theory, breeding mosquitoes, and conducting hundreds of tests to support this theory. *Click the following link to learn more:* <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/fever-carlos-finlay/>

## ED&I Retention and Participation Tips: *Make your meeting space accessible.*

Hold team meetings at the school before or after class time. This will make meetings more accessible for those who have trouble accessing transportation or who may feel uncomfortable in other environments due to inequities.

*Click the following link to learn more:* <https://www.firstinspires.org/resource-library/training-equity-diversity-inclusion>

## The *FIRST* NC ED&I Team: Contact us at: [FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com](mailto:FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com)

We are a team of coaches/mentors who want to help create a community and culture of people who embrace the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion, who want to develop themselves, and who understand that growth and diversity of all types lead to team excellence.

Anisha Patel - The Pitt Pirates 2642

Dave Lashley - Team SPORK 3196

Linda Whipker - Team PyroTech 3459

Melissa "Bee" Bube - Girls on Fire 5679

All Editions are Available Online at: <https://www.firstnorthcarolina.org/belonging-newsletter>