



# New York State Equal Opportunity & Diversity Newsletter



Edition 12

## CW3 Heather Ruter

New York Army/Air National Guard  
State Equal Employment Manager  
(SEEM) & Diversity Coordinator



## MSgt Donna Torres

New York Army/Air National Guard State  
Equal Employment Specialist

This newsletter is intended to update, inform, and remind management staff about important EO/employment issues, as well as federal and state legal developments. It serves as a training tool and may be shared with employees (posted in break rooms, etc.) at management's discretion. Questions or comments about this newsletter or other EO matters may be directed to: (518)786-4733 or (518) 786-4621 e-mail: SEEM@us.army.mil. You can also visit our Website @ <http://dmna.state.ny.us/eo/eo.php>

### This Issue Highlights:

- 2 Special Observance "National Disability Employment Awareness Month"
- 3 Special Observance "National American Indian Heritage Month"
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### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MISSION**

To improve and support mission readiness of the NYNG by promoting an environment free from personal, social, or institutional barriers that prevent members from rising to their highest level of responsibility based on individual merit, fitness, and capability.

### **Special Observances**

- **National Disability Employment Awareness Month** (1 – 30 October)
- **National American Indian Heritage Month** (1 – 30 November)
- **Veterans Day** (11 November)
- **December Multifaith Observances** (December)

**We welcome your letter to the editor. Please forward any input to CW3 Ruter or MSgt Torres by the due dates listed below.**

- Quarters: Due by:**
- 1) Oct – Nov – Dec (15 Sep)
  - 2) Jan – Feb – Mar (15 Dec)
  - 3) Apr – May – Jun (15 Mar)
  - 4) Jul – Aug – Sep (15 Jun)

[Heather.l.ruter.mil@mail.mil](mailto:Heather.l.ruter.mil@mail.mil)  
[Donna.m.torres.mil@mail.mil](mailto:Donna.m.torres.mil@mail.mil)

**Thank you for your service!**



## Special Observance

### National Disability Employment Awareness Month "Expect. Employ. Empower." (1- 31 October 2014)



Held each October, National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is a national campaign that raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The theme for 2014 is "Expect. Employ. Empower."

The Campaign for Disability Employment is a collaborative effort between several disability and business organizations that seek to promote positive employment outcomes for people with disabilities by encouraging employers and others to recognize the value and talent they bring to the workplace as well as the dividend to be realized by fully including people with disabilities at work. People with disabilities can and do make important contributions to America's businesses every day. By implementing good workplace practices, like maintaining a flexible and inclusive work environment, businesses can capitalize on the talents of qualified people with disabilities, benefitting everyone.

#### The What Can You Do? Initiative

Through its national "What can YOU do?" public outreach initiative, the Campaign for Disability Employment reinforces the reality that people with disabilities want to work and that their talents and abilities positively impact businesses both financially and organizationally. Several unique tools characterize the "What can YOU do?" initiative, including the Campaign's Web site, [WhatCanYouDoCampaign.org](http://WhatCanYouDoCampaign.org), which offers users the chance to learn, express their commitment to disability employment efforts and share what they "can do."



#### Local Organization:

Adult Career continued Education Service-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) offers access to a full range of employment and independent living services that may be needed by persons with disabilities through their lives. Through its administration of vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs, VR coordinates policy and services relating to:

- [transition and youth services](#) for high school students and youth up to age 25 with disabilities from school and post school to adult services;
- [vocational rehabilitation](#) services for working age individuals with disabilities;
- [independent living services](#) for people with disabilities of all ages; and
- [business services](#) for hiring a qualified diverse workforce.

#### Upcoming Event:

##### **National Disability Awareness Month**

**Date:** 29 October 2014

**Time:** 11:00 am – 11:30 am

**Place:** JFHQ Auditorium , 330 Old Niskayuna Road, Latham NY 12110

**Guest Speaker:** Bryan Baszczuk, Representative from the Adult Career Continued Education Service-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/>

**Reference:** <http://www.whatcanyoudocampaign.org/blog/index.php/about/>



## Special Observance



**(1 – 30 November 2014)**

For almost one hundred years, Americans both Indian and non-Indian have urged that there be permanently designated by the nation a special place on the calendar to honor the contributions, achievements, sacrifices, and cultural and historical legacy of the original inhabitants of what is now the United States and their descendants: the American Indian and Alaska Native people.

The quest for a national honoring of Native Americans began in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century as a private effort. As far back as the late 1970s, Congress has enacted legislation and subsequent presidents have issued annual proclamations designating a day, a week or a month to celebrate and commemorate the nation's American Indian and Alaska Native heritage. In 2009, Congress passed and the President signed legislation that established the Friday immediately following Thanksgiving Day of each year as "Native American Heritage Day."

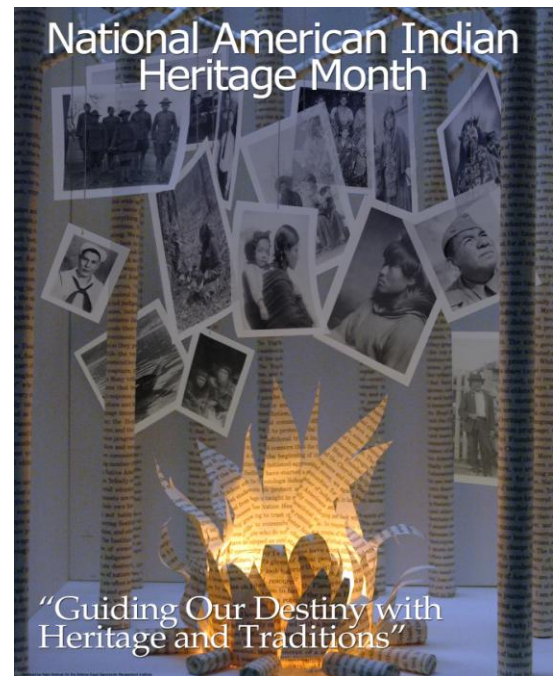
National American Indian Heritage Month celebrates and recognizes the accomplishments of the peoples who were the original inhabitants, explorers and settlers of the United States.

"National American Indian Heritage Month" had its origins in 1986 when Congress passed [Pub. L. 99-471](#) (PDF, 93KB) which authorized and requested the President to proclaim the week of November 23-30, 1986 as "American Indian Week." As directed by Congress, President Reagan issued [Presidential Proclamation 5577 \(external link\)](#) in November 1986 proclaiming the first American Indian Week. Both law and proclamation recognized the American Indians as the first inhabitants of the lands that now constitute the United States as well as making mention of their contributions to American society:

### Did you know?

- Many of the foods we eat and the medicines and remedies we use were introduced by Indians.
- Indians were the first to raise turkeys, llamas, guinea pigs, and honeybees for food.
- Native American Tribes, familiarly called Indians, have lived in New York State since the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, almost 100 years before Columbus arrived in the New World. Some sources date the tribes from as far back as the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century. They are referred to as the Iroquois Confederacy.

References: <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/commemorative-observations/index.php>  
<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/native-american-contributions>







# Special Observance

## Veterans Day

(11 November 2014)



World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” - officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

Soldiers of the 353rd Infantry near a church at Stenay, Meuse in France, wait for the end of hostilities. This photo was taken at 10:58 a.m., on November 11, 1918, two minutes before the armistice ending World War I went into effect. In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."



The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926, with these words:

**Whereas** the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and

**Whereas** it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and

**Whereas** the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.

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Reference: <http://www.va.gov/>

# Special Observance December Multifaith



## Multifaith Calendar Highlights

December 2013



Holy Day	Description	Impact to Personnel
<b>ADVENT</b> <b>[Christian]</b> 27 Nov – 24 Dec	The season of the preparation for the coming of Christ, also the beginning of the Christian liturgical year.	<b>Special worship services</b>
<b>ROHATSU, a.k.a., BODDHI DAY; BUDDHA'S ENLIGHTENMENT</b> <b>[Zen Buddhism]</b> 1-8 Dec	Zen Buddhists honor Buddha's enlightenment with an arduous retreat typically lasting a week.	<b>Work restrictions</b> - Adherents may seek permission to be excused from non-mission essential functions on 8 Dec or the week following.
<b>ASHURAH, a.k.a., ASHOORA</b> <b>[Islam]</b> 5 Dec (Mon)	This two-day fast is linked with several Islamic observances.	<b>Food restrictions (optional fast)</b> - Muslims may request permission to reduce or be excused from physical training (including PT Assessments) or limit their time outdoors.
<b>SAINT NICHOLAS</b> <b>[Orthodox Christian]</b> 6 Dec (Tue)	This feast honors Saint Nicholas.	<b>Special worship</b> - Orthodox Christians may seek permission to participate in the celebration.
<b>IMMACULATE CONCEPTION</b> <b>[Catholic Christian]</b> 8 Dec (Thu)	Catholics are morally obliged to observe the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.	<b>Special service</b> - Catholics may request time for participating in the celebration of the Eucharist and abstaining from unnecessary "servile" work.
<b>HANUKKAH, a.k.a., FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS</b> <b>[Jewish]</b> **Sunset 27 Nov – Sunset 5 Dec* *Dates change annually	Jews celebrate the rededication of the Temple by the Maccabees (167 B.C.E.) in their struggle against the Seleucids whose King Antiochus had attempted to suppress the religion of the Jews. Every evening another light is kindled in commemoration of the event.	<b>Special celebration</b> - Jews may seek permission to attend evening menorah lightings the eight nights and morning services.
<b>YULE (Winter Solstice)</b> <b>[Wicca/Druid]</b> 21 Dec (Wed)	It marks the beginning of many Pagan calendars. In many Pagan traditions, the concept of rebirth is expressed through the birth of a Divine Child.	<b>Special celebration</b> - Wiccans and Druids (any Neo Pagans) on evening work shifts may request time off for High Day observances.
<b>CHRISTMAS EVE &amp; DAY</b> <b>[Christian]</b> 24/25 Dec (Sat-Sun)	It marks the birth of Jesus Christ and the beginning of the feast of Christmas which lasts for 12 days, from the eve of Christmas Day to the eve of Epiphany.	<b>Special worship and work restriction</b> - Christians may seek permission to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist on Christmas Day.

**\*\*The dates for Hanukkah, a.k.a., Festival of Lights change annually.**

Hanukkah 2014 begins in the evening of Tuesday, December 16 and ends in the evening of Wednesday, December 24.

Reference: <http://www.chaplaincorps.af.mil/>



# Monthly EEO Training



## What is the No FEAR Act?

The **Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act** is a law that was signed on May 15, 2002, by President Bush with the intention of making federal agencies more accountable for violations of anti-discrimination and whistle-blower protection laws. "**No FEAR**" is the short title for the Act. The Act imposes additional duties upon Federal agency employers intended to reinvigorate their longstanding obligation to provide a work environment free of discrimination and retaliation.

Five duties that the No FEAR Act places on a **Federal** agency are:

- At least every **two years**, an agency must provide training to its employees, including managers, regarding the rights and remedies available under the employment discrimination and whistleblower protection laws.
- A federal agency must reimburse the Judgement Fund for payments made to employees, former employees, applicants for Federal employment because of actual or alleged violations of Federal employment discrimination laws, Federal whistleblower protection laws, and retaliation claims arising from the assertion of rights under those laws.
- An agency must provide annual notice to its employees, former employees, and applicants for Federal employment concerning the rights and remedies applicable to them under the employment discrimination and whistleblower protection laws.
- An agency must submit to Congress, EEOC, the Department of Justice, and OPM, an annual report setting forth information about the agency's efforts to improve compliance with the employment discrimination and whistleblower protection laws and detailing the status of complaints brought against the agency under these laws.
- An agency must post quarterly on its public Web site summary statistical data pertaining to EEO complaints filed with the agency.

For more information on the No FEAR Act visit: <http://www.eeoc.gov/> or <http://www.gsa.gov/>

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### Motivational Quote



When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us.

~Helen Keller

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# Joint Diversity Corner



## Special Emphasis Program Council (SEPC)

This council is a joint initiative of the full-time support personnel appointed in Special Emphasis Program Manager positions that promote the participation and advancement of the members of the group within the DMNA that they represent.

### Mission:

To improve the status of minorities and protective classes. The ultimate responsibility for the SEPC belongs to management and leadership. However, Special Emphasis Program Managers (SEPMs) are responsible for assisting management in actions that will enhance the employment status of these groups.

### Vision:

Analysis, Advise, Liason and Advocate

### Goal:

SEPMs recognize the optimum readiness of the New York Air and Army Guard depends on the active inclusion of all groups supporting excellence in military and civilian performance.

### **SEPM Vacancies:**

Federal Womens Program Manager (ARNG)  
Native American Indian Program Manager (ANG)  
Asian & Pacific Islander Program Manager (ANG)

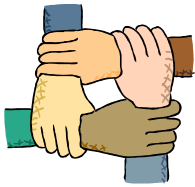
### **Upcoming SEPC Meeting:**

5 November 2014, 1000 Hours, HRO, Room 405

If you would like to join us and can't make it to Latham, you can call in for the teleconference.  
Call or email the below individuals to be added to the teleconference or meeting.

**\*\*To become a member of the SEPC please contact CW3 Heather Ruter, (518) 786-4733, [heather.i.ruter.mil@mail.mil](mailto:heather.i.ruter.mil@mail.mil) or MSgt Donna Torres, (518)786-4621, [donna.m.torres.mil@mail.mil](mailto:donna.m.torres.mil@mail.mil)**





# Joint Diversity Corner



## Continued

<b>Program Director</b>	CW3 Heather Ruter, (518) 786-4733 JFHQ, Latham <a href="mailto:heather.l.ruter.mil@mail.mil">heather.l.ruter.mil@mail.mil</a>
<b>African American Program Mgr. (ARNG)</b>	SFC Lamont Pugh, (914) 788-7430 Camp Smith, Westchester County <a href="mailto:lamont.pugh.mil@mail.mil">lamont.pugh.mil@mail.mil</a>
<b>Federal Women's Program Mgr (ARNG)</b>	VACANT
<b>Federal Women's Program Mgr. (ANG)</b>	MSgt Donna Torres, (518) 786-4621 JFHQ, Latham <a href="mailto:donna.m.torres.mil@mail.mil">donna.m.torres.mil@mail.mil</a>
<b>Persons with Disabilities Mgr. (ARNG)</b>	CW3 Heather Ruter, (518) 786-4733 JFHQ, Latham <a href="mailto:heather.l.ruter.mil@mail.mil">heather.l.ruter.mil@mail.mil</a>
<b>Persons with Disabilities Mgr. (Alternate)</b>	Ms. Bonnie Lu Brehm, (518) 786-4426 JFHQ, Latham <a href="mailto:bonnielu.l.brehm.civ@mail.mil">bonnielu.l.brehm.civ@mail.mil</a>
<b>Hispanic Program Mgr. (ANG)</b>	SMSgt Robert Orellano, (315) 334-6753 EADS, Rome <a href="mailto:bobby.orellano.mil@mail.mil">bobby.orellano.mil@mail.mil</a>
<b>Hispanic Program Mgr. (Alternate, ANG)</b>	2Lt Jose Ortiz, (315) 334-6313 EADS, Rome <a href="mailto:jose.ortiz.2.mil@mail.mil">jose.ortiz.2.mil@mail.mil</a>
<b>Hispanic Program Mgr (ARNG)</b>	SGT Juan Portillo, (716) 601-4033 Det 1 – 3/126 <sup>th</sup> AVN, Rochester <a href="mailto:juan.a.portillo.mil@mail.mil">juan.a.portillo.mil@mail.mil</a>
<b>Native-American Indian Program Mgr. (ARNG)</b>	Lt Jean Kratzer, (518) 786-4458 Watervleit Arsenal <a href="mailto:jean.kratzer.mil@mail.mil">jean.kratzer.mil@mail.mil</a>
<b>Native American Indian Program Mgr (ANG)</b>	VACANT
<b>Asian &amp; Pacific Islander Program Mgr. (ARNG)</b>	SSG Theresa Barone-Lopez, (518) 285-5848 101 <sup>st</sup> Signal BN, Yonkers <a href="mailto:theresa.baronelopez.mil@mail.mil">theresa.baronelopez.mil@mail.mil</a>
<b>Asian &amp; Pacific Islander Program Mgr. (Alternate, ARNG)</b>	MAJ Henry Wong, (917) 562-9106 369 Sustain. Brig, Harlem <a href="mailto:henry.wong@us.army.mil">henry.wong@us.army.mil</a>
<b>Asian &amp; Pacific Islander Program Mgr. (ANG)</b>	VACANT

As of 11 Mar 14