



HUNGERFORD

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NOVEMBER 2025

DEI

NEWSLETTER

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by Terra McMillan

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INTERNATIONAL POTLUCK



The DEI team is making plans.

We want you to start thinking about what foods you would like to share
with your office mates!

Tentative date – February 2026

The intent is to have participation at each office.

Be on the lookout for more details in the coming months.



November 2025

Native American Heritage Month

November 1 – All Saints' Day; Dia de Los Muertos

November 11 – Veterans Day

November 13 – World Kindness Day

November 13 – 19 – Transgender Awareness Week

November 16 – International Day for Tolerance; Dutch American Heritage Day

November 19 – International Men's Day

November 20 – Transgender Day of Remembrance; Universal Children's Day

November 25 – International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

November 27 – Thanksgiving Day

November 29 – International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

December 2025

Universal Human Rights Month

December 1 – World Aids Day

December 2 – International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

December 3 – International Day of Persons with Disabilities

December 5 – International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development

December 10 – International Human Rights Day

December 15–22 – Hanukkah (Jewish Festival of Lights)

December 16–24 – Las Posadas (Religious Festival)

December 18 – International Migrants Day

December 21 – Yule; Winter Solstice

December 25 – Christmas

December 26–January 1 – Kwanzaa

January 2026

National Mentoring Month

Poverty in America Awareness Month

Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Month

January 1 – New Year's Day; Gantan-Sai (Shinto)

January 3 – Mahayana New Year (Buddhist)

January 4 – World Braille Day

January 7 – Coptic Orthodox Christmas

January 13 – Maghi (Sikh)

January 14 – Makar Sankranti (Pongal) – Hindu

January 19 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 18 – World Religion Day

January 24 – International Day of Education

January 26 – International Customs Day

January 27 – International Holocaust Remembrance Day

February 2026

American Heart Month

Black History Month

Ethnic Equality Month

February 1 – National Freedom Day; Imbolc – Wicca/Paganism

February 7 – National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

February 9 – International Epilepsy Day

February 10 – Safer Internet Day

February 11 – International Day of Women & Girls in Science

February 14 – Valentine's Day

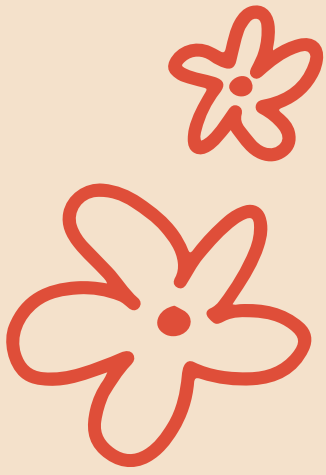
February 15 – Nirvana Day (Buddhist); International Childhood Cancer Day;
Maha Shivaratri (Hindu)

February 16 – Family Day (Canada)

February 17 – Chinese New Year (Lunar New Year) Year of the Horse; Mardi
Gras; Ramadan begins

February 18 – Ash Wednesday

February 20 – World Day of Social Justice



Sites to visit for information related to events happening in your area:

<https://www.experiencegr.com/events>

<https://www.holland.org/events>

<https://www.stjoetoday.com/events>

<https://www.visitmuskegon.org/events/>

<https://www.greenvillechamber.net/current-events#!event-list>





From Fitting In to Belonging

by Jenny Terry (Sun, Yuyang 孙雨阳)

“Average.” That was my mother’s favorite word to describe me to others.

“Crying in front of others makes you look weak,” she said to me on my wedding day – her version of wisdom and encouragement.

So yes, confidence didn’t come naturally to me. But over time, I’ve learned that every challenge in finding myself across cultures, languages and identities, has shaped who I am today. When I was younger, I dreamed of going somewhere completely different (it may have been a little extreme to move across the entire world). I was young, bold, and just naive enough to think I could figure it out. Looking back, I’m proud that I did.

When I was choosing where to go to college, I had university offer letters spread out in front of me: Arizona, Connecticut, Colorado, Iowa, Michigan. “Michigan, huh, where is that?” I wondered. I pulled up Baidu (the Chinese version of Google) and typed in “Michigan.” The screen filled with photos of glowing forests – leaves in golden, red, and amber hues. “That’s where I want to be,” I decided.

Spoiler alert: Michigan autumn lasts about two days.

When I arrived at Michigan State University, everything felt enormous. Everyone around me seemed to belong, and I couldn’t put my finger on exactly what made me feel different. Maybe it was my clothes, my accent, the way I walked or just my own insecurities.

I began adapting in small ways: changing how I dressed, listening carefully to how others spoke, and pushing myself to speak up in class. I wanted to be seen as confident and capable, not “the quiet international student.” I gave myself an English name “Jenny” and made sure everyone used it. Eventually, I even changed it legally to Jenny Terry (my husband’s last name), thinking it would help people see me as less foreign.



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But over the years, I realized something powerful – no one was actually asking me to hide who I was. That pressure came from my own fear of standing out. By trying to fit in, I had drifted away from the person I truly was.

For a long time, I felt suspended between two identities – too Chinese for America, yet too American whenever I went back to China. At the same time, I was questioning if I was “trying too hard.” But today, I see that I don’t have to choose.

Twelve years later, I’m still learning, but with a new mindset. I’ve reconnected with the parts of myself I once downplayed. I embrace my background and the experiences that make my story unique.

Belonging isn’t about fitting into someone else’s definition of “normal.” It’s about finding confidence in your own identity and allowing others to see you for who you are.

That doesn’t mean it’s easy. It’s still a work in progress. I’m not yet completely comfortable in my own skin, and my relationship with my parents is still complicated.

But I do know this: I’m on my way. The finish line – the version of me that feels whole and proud of every part of my story – looks clearer every day.



Universal Design- Going Beyond ADA

by Hillary Miller



"Make your space more accessible. It just makes sense."
-Disability Advocates of Kent County (DAKC)

In early 2024, the firm received education and insight from a local organization, Disability Advocates of Kent County (DAKC). This organization's mission is to work alongside people with disabilities as they seek to lead self-directed lives and advocate for accessible, welcoming communities.

This led us to ask ourselves: what more can we do to be inclusive of people with disabilities? Sure, we had the basics covered—like adhering to ADA requirements—but that just isn't enough. Many barriers still exist in our offices. DAKC believes everyone should be able to live, work, and participate fully in their community—no exceptions. Hungerford agrees.

We partnered with DAKC to conduct an Accessibility Review of three of our office locations to explore additional considerations of Universal Design beyond the minimum ADA requirements. When our offices work for people of all abilities, they work better for everyone.

The Accessibility Review included:

- Consultation with an Accessibility Consultant
- Site walk-through
- ADA compliance assessment
- Customized recommendations that go beyond code to reflect best practices in Universal Design
- A written report

[Accessibility Reviews | Disability Advocates Kent County](https://www.dakc.us/service-areas/community/accessibility-reviews)

<https://www.dakc.us/service-areas/community/accessibility-reviews>



Updates on our progress so far:

- Hungerford received reports for the Grand Rapids, Greenville, and Muskegon offices.
- Reports were analyzed by our DEI HR Subcommittee, which includes Andrea Russel, Hunter Schumaker, and Hillary Miller.
- Information was sorted and categorized into short-term and long-term goals, with investment and impact guiding the prioritization of action items.
- Recommendations were reviewed with Tom Cripps and CJ Meade, who manage our buildings and office spaces.
- They have been working diligently to implement the recommended changes in each office. CJ also incorporated several Universal Design concepts during the remodel of the Holland office.

*Have you noticed that Greenville no longer has doorknobs? They've all been replaced with lever handles.

*Did you see that the updated conference room naming system now indicates whether a room is accessible?

Next Steps:

- Highlight the changes made to each office.
- Educate our team on everyday considerations and the important role they play in creating and maintaining an accessible environment.
- Educate our community and clients on ways they could consider improving accessibility for all.
- Incorporate long-term goals and/or considerations into future office remodels and updates.