

Belonging

the newsletter from the *FIRST* NC ED&I Team – March 2024

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.

Its Competition Time!

There is no better feeling than seeing your hard work come full circle and being in an atmosphere where like-minded students can share a passion for STEAM outside of the classroom.

However, with the build season coming to a close and the heat of competition beginning, we must be reminded on how to stay grounded and manage any related stressors.

Most times, the pressures of competition come from within, as we are hard on ourselves to be successful. Constant demand, time-management, quick turnarounds, robot performance; all of this can be managed as long as you are able to first take care of yourself and your mental well-being.

Here are a few ways to help manage the stressors of competition:

- **Utilize positive coping skills.** There are over 100 coping skills that can benefit one's well-being and help build resilience towards negative emotions, panic attacks, or other difficult situations. From deep breathing exercises, counting to ten, exercising, drawing, or writing, these are a few ways to help manage daily stressors. Tip: use leisure activities that you enjoy as a coping skill to help distract your mind in a positive manner.
- **Be positive.** Self-esteem can play a role in managing stressors. When you have a higher self-esteem, you tend to be more confident in your abilities, act as a leader, and carry a positive attitude. Remind yourself that you can learn from mistakes, you are in control of your feelings, and that you can do anything you set your mind to. While you're boosting yourself, remember to be positive, kind and supportive to others. This will help towards their self-esteem. And in the spirit of *FIRST*, always remember to bring that gracious professionalism!
- **Feed your mind.** It is very important that you eat well and get a good night's sleep before heading into competition.
- **Talk to someone.** Whether it be a coach, mentor, parent, or friend, simply sharing with trusted peers your feelings can ease your mind. Know that you are not alone and that your feelings are valid.

Do **you** have tips for other teams on how to include people and help them feel they belong?

Send them to FIRSTNC-EDI@googlegroups.com or use this [GOOGLE FORM](#) and we'll include them in upcoming newsletters.

From *FIRST*: Just in case you missed it! – IYKYK: Build Season One-Liners

FIRST® build seasons are full of hard work, late nights, and endless fun with your team. During this time, you'll also probably hear more than one funny quip coming from your teammates that makes you laugh hysterically because, if you know, you know!

We recently asked the *FIRST* Community to share their best build season quotes with us on Instagram, and they did not disappoint! Check out the link below for some of the best.

- [Build Season One-Liners](#)

March Holidays and Events:

March is Women's History Month. Established in 1987, the month recognizes all women for their valuable contributions to history and society.

March 1: St. David's Day (Wales) - Celebration of Welsh culture.

March 2 (sunset) to March 20 (sunset): Nineteen-Day Fast (Bahá'í Faith) - A period of spiritual reflection and renewal.

March 6: Magha Puja Day (Buddhist) - Commemoration of Buddha's teaching of Ovada Patimokkha.

March 7 to March 8: Lailat al Bara'a (Islamic) - Night of Forgiveness, a time for seeking forgiveness and reconciliation.

March 8: International Women's Day - Celebration of women's achievements and a call for gender equality.

March 13 to April 15: Deaf History Month - Recognition of deaf history and culture, promoting deaf rights and inclusion.

March 17: St. Patrick's Day (Ireland) - Celebration of Irish culture and heritage.

March 18: Holi (Hindu and Sikh) - Festival of colors, celebrating the arrival of spring and the victory of good over evil.

March 19: St. Joseph's Day (Western Christianity) - Commemoration of St. Joseph, emphasizing fatherhood and family.

March 20: Ostara (Pagan/Wiccan) & Nowruz/Norooz (Persian New Year) - Celebrations of spring and renewal in various cultures.

March 21: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - Promoting tolerance, inclusion, and respect among all races and ethnicities.

March 22 to March 31: Chaitra Navratri (Hindu) - Nine-day festival dedicated to the worship of the goddess Durga.

March 25: International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade - Honoring the victims and promoting awareness of the transatlantic slave trade's legacy.

March 30: Ram Navami (Hindu) - Celebration of the birth of Lord Rama.

March 31: International Transgender Day of Visibility - Recognizing and celebrating transgender people, raising awareness of the challenges they face, and advocating for their rights and inclusion.

Inspiration & Recognition Spotlight: Historical Women of STEM

Mary Anning (1799–1847): An English fossil collector, dealer, and paleontologist who made important discoveries in the Jurassic marine fossil beds in Dorset, England. Her findings contributed to important changes in scientific thinking about prehistoric life and the history of the Earth.

Ada Lovelace (1815–1852): An English mathematician and writer, chiefly known for her work on Charles Babbage's early mechanical general-purpose computer, the Analytical Engine. She is considered the world's first computer programmer.

Emmy Noether (1882–1935): A German mathematician known for her groundbreaking contributions to abstract algebra and theoretical physics. Noether's Theorem is fundamental in the field of physics, relating symmetries and conservation laws.

Katherine Johnson (1918–2020): An African American mathematician whose calculations of orbital mechanics as a NASA employee were critical to the success of the first and subsequent U.S. crewed spaceflights. She was part of the "Hidden Figures" team.

Chien-Shiung Wu (1912–1997): A Chinese-American experimental physicist who made significant contributions to the Manhattan Project during World War II. She is best known for conducting the Wu experiment, which contributed to the understanding of the weak force in particle physics.

Dorothy Vaughan (1910–2008): An African American mathematician and computer programmer who worked for the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA), which later became NASA. She was one of the first African American supervisors at NACA and contributed to the early success of the U.S. space program.

Sally Ride (1951–2012): An American astronaut, physicist, and educator who became the first American woman in space in 1983 aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger. She remains the youngest American astronaut to have traveled to space.

Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Training: *Kids Included Together (KIT)*

Inclusion tools will provide practical steps to achieve your disability inclusion goals and help you feel confident in understanding inclusion, creating accommodations, supporting and responding positively to behavior challenges and creating supportive environments. Deciding how to respond to concerning behavior in the moment can lead to a de-escalation or escalation of the situation and can influence whether an incident will reoccur. It's important for coaches and mentors to know the kinds of supportive responses they can use to de-escalate concerning situations and help youth regulate.

Click here to view: [Supportive Responses](#)

The *FIRST* NC ED&I Team: Contact us at: 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 (he/him) - Team SPORK 3196

Linda Whipker (she/her) - Team PyroTech 3459

Melissa "Bee" Bube (they/she) - Girls on Fire 5679

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