



# Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

January 8, 2025



## A Message from Dr. Keith Johnson, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

### “Embracing the New Year: Tradition, Reflection, and Progress”

Dear Friends,

The start of the New Year has become a traditional time where generally, people around the nation tend to embrace the notion of “doing away with the old and bringing in the new.” Essentially, dropping old habits and establishing new ones.

The tradition of making New Year’s resolutions dates back thousands of years, with its roots in ancient civilizations, particularly the Babylonians and Romans. The Babylonians have been given credit for starting the tradition during their 12-day New Year festival known as Akitu which normally occurred in mid-March to align with the spring planting season. The Romans on the other hand, formalized the New Year celebration under Julius Caesar, who established January 1 as the start of the New Year in 46 BC with the Julian calendar. During the Roman culture, January was named after Janus, the two-faced Roman god of beginning and transitions, who symbolically looked back at the past and forward to the future. The Romans offered sacrifices to Janus and made promises of good behavior and moral improvement for the upcoming year.

~continued on page 2~



*Everyone has the power for greatness,  
not for fame but greatness,  
because greatness is determined by service.*

*~Martin Luther King Jr.~*

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## Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

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Christians also integrated their version of New Year traditions. In medieval Europe, they adopted the practice of religious reflection and renewal. They encouraged each other to reflect on past mistakes and commit to living a more virtuous life. The practice of Watch Night services originated in the early 18th century among Moravians, a small Christian denomination, and was later adopted by John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, in 1740. These services were typically held on New Year's Eve when this time was set aside for prayer and making resolutions for the coming year.

Enslaved African Americans also established their version of watch night which took on a much deeper significant meaning on the night of December 31, 1862. On this night, Black communities gathered in churches and private homes, praying and watching the clock in anticipation of January 1, 1863, when President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was set to take effect. The Emancipation Proclamation would declare freedom for enslaved people in Confederate states, marking the beginning of the formal abolition of slavery.

As the clock struck midnight, and January 1 arrived, enslaved and free Black people celebrated, knowing that the Proclamation symbolized a step toward freedom, even though the enforcement varied around the U.S. and complete emancipation was not immediate. For Black people, this profound moment solidified Watch Night as a commemoration of liberation and a testament to resilience, faith, and community. This practice continues today throughout the Black community.

However, by the 19th and 20th centuries, the practice of Watch Night and making resolutions became more secularized and focused on personal goals rather than religious commitments. Today, New Year's resolutions are a global tradition where people set goals for self-improvement, health, career, or relationships, reflecting personal priorities and aspirations for the year ahead. Though the specifics have evolved, the core idea of self-reflection and committing to positive change remains central to the tradition in most cultures.

Today, it is pretty common to make resolutions centered around health and fitness, personal growth, financial goals, relationships, career and education, self-care, travel, and the like. These resolutions remain popular because they address core areas of human desire. However, the intent is worthy but the follow-through and achievements often go unfilled.

## Continued ~ Message from Dr. Keith Johnson

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According to Lark Allen of the Market Research Company, 3 in 10 Americans made a resolution in 2024. Sixty-two percent of those making resolutions felt pressured to do so. Seventy-nine percent of New Year's goals involved improving health. Allen's research also suggests that women (64%) tend to feel slightly more pressured than men (60%) to make resolutions each year. When it comes to age groups, Gen Z feels the most pressure to commit to resolutions at 39%.

Other research suggests that of those who establish resolutions, only eight to nine percent of them actually keep their resolutions throughout the year. I think we can all agree that it's very hard sticking to New Year's resolutions. The good news is, there is no shame in picking back up where we have fallen short. With that said, ETSU has a vision, mission, and goals that we are still pressing forward to fulfill. It is our responsibility to work with intentionality, deliberately, and with passion to live out our established goals and vision, which includes the following:

- PEOPLE come first, are treated with dignity and respect, and are encouraged to achieve their full potential;
- RELATIONSHIPS are built on honesty, integrity, and trust;
- DIVERSITY of people and thought is respected;
- EXCELLENCE is achieved through teamwork, leadership, creativity, and a strong work ethic;
- EFFICIENCY is achieved through wise use of human and financial resources; and
- COMMITMENT to intellectual achievement is embraced.

Stay safe, and remember that brighter days are ahead. Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Keith V. Johnson



***Never, never be afraid to do what's right,  
especially if the well-being of a person or animal is at stake.  
Society's punishments are small compared to the wounds  
we inflict on our soul when we look the other way.***

***~Martin Luther King Jr.~***

# New Year, New Opportunities: Turning Resolutions into Lasting Success

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With the arrival of a new year, resolutions can be on the forefront of a person's mind. The choice, decision to do something differently, incorporate something new, stop doing something, can also be viewed as a solution. They can be a variety of goals that people set for themselves to achieve. When a resolution is well-defined, actionable, and aligned with the "fresh

start effect" it can provide a mental boost to start new habits and create lasting change.

## Tips for making and keeping resolutions:

- **Make them meaningful:** Choose resolutions that are personally meaningful and resonate with what you want for your life.
- **Set realistic goals:** Start small and make adjustments as needed. Breaking down large goals into manageable actions can increase the likelihood of sustained effort.
- **Track your progress:** Track your progress on a weekly or monthly basis to stay motivated. Sharing goals with others or using tracking tools can help with consistency. Celebrating small wins and acknowledging progress can maintain motivation.

Make a firm decision to improve your academic, professional, and personal life.

Some suggestions include:

1. Be on time.
2. Have a good work ethic.
3. Demonstrate effort.
4. Be aware of your body language.
5. Be energetic.
6. Have a positive attitude.
7. Be passionate.
8. Be coachable.
9. Do extra.

# What's Your Resolution Personality?

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Take this fun quiz to discover your unique resolution personality and get personalized tips to make your goals stick this year!

## Questions:

### ➤ What's your approach to setting goals?

- A. I dream big and aim high.
- B. I carefully plan each step.
- C. I focus on achieving one thing at a time.
- D. I reflect and decide as I go.

### ➤ What motivates you most?

- A. The thrill of achieving something extraordinary.
- B. Seeing progress and checking things off a list.
- C. Encouragement from others.
- D. Aligning goals with my personal values.

### ➤ What's your biggest challenge with resolutions?

- A. Sticking with them after the initial excitement fades.
- B. Finding the time to tackle everything.
- C. Staying consistent and motivated.
- D. Deciding what's most important to focus on.

### ➤ How do you celebrate small wins?

- A. By setting even bigger goals.
- B. With a reward I've planned in advance.
- C. Sharing my success with friends or family.
- D. Reflecting on how far I've come.

### ➤ What's your ideal way to track progress?

- A. I don't; I go with the flow.
- B. A detailed checklist or app.
- C. Weekly check-ins with an accountability partner.
- D. Journaling or personal reflection.

## Results:

### Mostly A's: The Dreamer

You're a visionary with big aspirations! Focus on breaking your goals into smaller, actionable steps to stay on track.

### Mostly B's: The Planner

You thrive on structure and organization. Keep doing what you do best, but allow for flexibility when life happens.

### Mostly C's: The Achiever

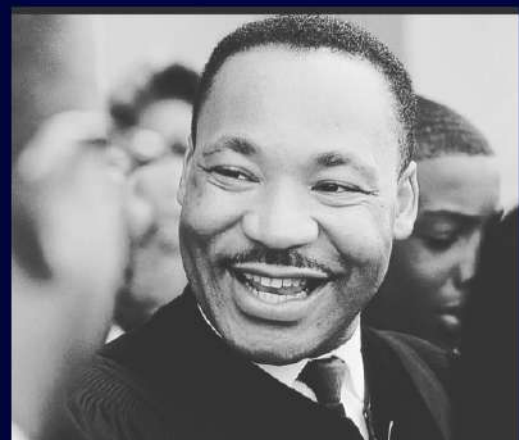
You're driven by progress and encouragement. Surround yourself with a supportive community and celebrate your wins.

### Mostly D's: The Reflector

You're thoughtful and value purpose over speed. Use reflection to set meaningful goals and adapt as needed.

## Upcoming Events

January 2025				
Monday	Jan. 13th	The MLK Legacy Program	Carillon Alumni Plaza (Bell Tower)	11:30am-12:30pm
Tuesday	Jan. 21st	MLK Cake Cutting Celebration	D.P Culp Student Center	11:00am-2:00pm
February 2025				
Monday	Feb. 3rd	Red, Black and Green Ribbons Give away.	D.P Culp Student Center	2:00pm-4:30pm
Tuesday	Feb. 4th	Red, Black and Green Ribbons Give away	D.P Culp Student Center	2:00pm-4:30pm
Wednesday	Feb. 5th	Sherrod Library Diverse Characters Book Club	Sherrod Library room #309	5:00pm-6:00pm
Wednesday	Feb. 5th	TRIO McNair Informational Session	<a href="#">Zoom</a>	1:00pm-2:00pm



Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

## MLK Legacy Program

**JAN  
13**

*Alumni Bell Tower*

*Rain location: Burgin Dossett 2nd Floor*

*11:30 am to 12:30 pm*

Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Martin Luther King, Jr.



**24th ANNUAL**

# PRAYER BREAKFAST

**BELOVED COMMUNITY**

*"IT STARTS WITH ME!"*

**SATURDAY, JAN. 18, 2025 - 10:00AM**

**DOORS OPEN AT 9:30AM**

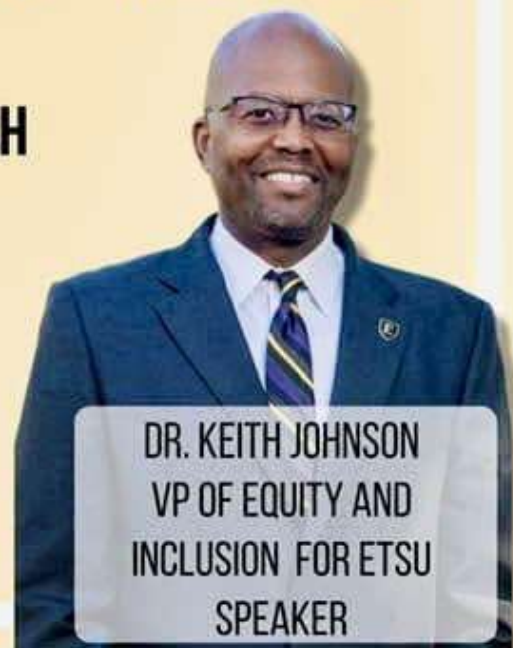
**WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**TICKETS \$15**

AGES 15 AND UNDER FREE

**SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT BY LOCAL YOUTH**

*TICKETS PURCHASED AT THE DOOR OR  
CARVER RECREATION CENTER  
MONEY SERVICES*



**DR. KEITH JOHNSON**  
VP OF EQUITY AND  
INCLUSION FOR ETSU  
SPEAKER



## Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center

Martin Luther King, Jr.

### DAY OF SERVICE

MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2025

9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Carver Recreation Center

322 W Watauga Ave. Johnson City TN 37601

“WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR OTHERS?”

- MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



For more information, contact 423-439-4844 or [etsumc@etsu.edu](mailto:etsumc@etsu.edu)



## Mary V. Jordan Multicultural Center Martin Luther King, Jr.

### MLK Commemoration

“King’s Beloved Community”

Host: Kevin L. Brooks, Ph.D.

Song Selection: ETSU Gospel Choir

Candle Lighting: Sigma Beta Chapter

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Culp Center East TN Room 272

11:30 am to 12:30 pm

Jan  
28



For more information, contact 423-439-4844 or [etsumc@etsu.edu](mailto:etsumc@etsu.edu)



PRESENTED BY THE ETSU WOMEN'S, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY STUDIES PROGRAM, DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE & LANGUAGE AND "THE MOCKINGBIRD"

# SPEAKING QUEERLY



WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY  
12TH 2025, 7-9PM  
CULP CENTER 272 EAST  
TENNESSEE ROOM

COFFEE BAR BY EARLY BIRD'S COFFEE CO.

FEATURED PERFORMERS

OPEN MIC BY ETSU COMMUNITY

TO SHOWCASE THE POETRY OF THOSE OF US WHO BELIEVE IN THE RESILIENCE OF THE QUEER COMMUNITY — AND TO UPLIFT THOSE WHO MAY NOT YET KNOW HOW.

\*EVENT IS 18+ AND MAY CONTAIN SENSITIVE CONTENT, PLEASE HELP US CREATE A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT AND TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER!

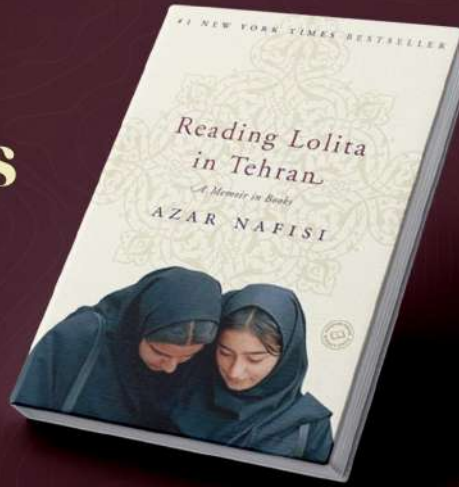
WGSS@ETSU.EDU / DAUGHT@ETSU.EDU



# Diverse Characters Book Club

“Reading Lolita  
in Tehran”  
By Azar Nafisi

Feb 5th & Apr 2nd **5pm**  
Sherrod Library, Room 309



Register here

First 30 registrants  
receive FREE copy

## B.U.C.S. ACADEMY



Applications Open from  
December 1, 2024 - May 1, 2025

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For more information

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We would like to  
hear from you.

If you have an announcement, event, accomplishment, etc. you would like to have published in the newsletter send them to Kim Maturo at [maturo@etsu.edu](mailto:maturo@etsu.edu).

To add a name to our mailing list, please email Kim Maturo at [maturo@etsu.edu](mailto:maturo@etsu.edu).