

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

## NEWSLETTER



*Erica Best, Executive Assistant  
A Hand Up Outreach Program, Panama City, FL*

### Journey to Success: Erica Best

One on one, One by One, a Royal American Management non-profit, provides free pre and post-job placement services to individuals referred by the Florida Department of Children and Families in Bay County, FL. "Seeing our participants find the strength and courage to re-direct their lives is inspirational and what this program is all about", says Julie Ramirez, One on One, Welfare Transition Coordinator.

Welfare-to-work transition participant, Erica Best, is a shining example. When Erica came to the program in 2018, she faced many obstacles including unemployment, financial challenges and battling drug and alcohol addiction. As a single mother of nine children, she knew she needed to make changes—not only for herself, but also for her family. Erica was finally ready to commit to getting her life on the right path.

After recovering from addiction, Erica enrolled in Career Source's Welfare Transition program. While in the program, Erica received support from an assigned case manager and mentor who she developed close

relationships with and considers to be like family. The welfare transition program also provided job readiness classes, assistance with food, childcare, and transportation. It was during this time that Erica also made the commitment to volunteer to gain employability skills to receive future employment opportunities.

With assistance from the welfare transition program, Erica was able to redirect her life. Fast forward to December 2021—Erica is now an Executive Assistant at A Hand Up, an outreach program servicing families, seniors, and veterans.

"My new job is very fulfilling and I love giving back to people in need. Being able to do this full-time is amazing—especially with the difficult journey I had to get to where I am today" Erica says.

She's truly appreciative of the services she received from both One on One, One by One and Career Source. Her work with these agencies helped her realize all she needed was a hand up and not a hand-out to achieve success.

#### **[Click Here to View A Personal Interview with Erica](#)**

To View the Interview You Can Also Visit the URL Link:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=en8yPMi40G8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=en8yPMi40G8)

## VOICES OF DIVERSITY

We encourage our staff and residents to share their authentic diversity viewpoints, life stories, experiences, and even cherished recipes.

Got an interesting story or special recipe?

Share it with us here:

Email - [DEINewsletter@Royalamerican.com](mailto:DEINewsletter@Royalamerican.com)

*"When we share our experiences, that is where the seeds of trust are planted."*

# DECEMBER OBSERVANCES

## UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH

People in the U.S. and around the world join together and stand up for the rights and dignity of all individuals. December 10, Human Rights Day, is a global holiday that marks the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948.

***"Human rights are not a privilege conferred by government.  
They are every human being's entitlement by virtue of humanity"***  
**-Mother Teresa**

## 12/3: INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Celebrated every year on the 3rd of December, International Day of People with disability promotes the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities at every level of society and development, and to raise awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of political, social, economic, and cultural life.

***"There is no greater disability in society than the inability to see a person as more"***  
**-Robery M Hensel**

## 12/25: CHRISTMAS

Christmas, a Christian holiday honoring the birth of Jesus, has evolved into a worldwide religious and secular celebration, incorporating many pre-Christian and pagan traditions into the festivities.

***"Christmas is the spirit of giving without a thought of getting. It is happiness because we see joy in people. It is forgetting self and finding time for others. It is discarding the meaningless and stressing the true values"***  
**-Thomas S. Monson**

## 11/28 - 12/6: HANUKKAH

Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a Jewish festival commemorating the recovery of Jerusalem and subsequent rededication of the Second Temple at the beginning of the Maccabean revolt against the Seleucid Empire in the 2nd century BCE.

***"A little bit of light dispels a lot of darkness"***  
**-Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi**

## 12/26 - 1/1 - KWANZA

Kwanzaa celebrates African roots. The African American and Pan African holiday is anchored by seven principles known as the Nguzo Saba which aims to inspire Black people to be united, self-determined, accountable for their communities, financially invested in Black-owned businesses, purposeful with their lives, creative and full of faith.

***"To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it"***  
**-Kuumba (One of the Seven Principles)**

## CULTURAL CUISINE

### Classic Potato Latkes

*Origin: Eastern European countries of Germany Austria, Russia and Poland*

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large Russet potatoes (about 1 pound), scrubbed and cut lengthwise into quarters
- 1 large onion (8 ounces), peeled and cut into quarters
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons coarse kosher salt (or 1 teaspoon fine sea salt), plus more for sprinkling
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Safflower or other oil, for frying



## DIRECTIONS:

Step 1: Using a food processor with a coarse grating disc, grate the potatoes and onion. Transfer the mixture to a clean dishtowel and squeeze and wring out as much of the liquid as possible.

Step 2: Working quickly, transfer the mixture to a large bowl. Add the eggs, flour, salt, baking powder and pepper, and mix until the flour is absorbed.

Step 3: In a medium heavy-bottomed pan over medium-high heat, pour in about 1/4 inch of the oil. Once the oil is hot (a drop of batter placed in the pan should sizzle), use a heaping tablespoon to drop the batter into the hot pan, cooking in batches. Use a spatula to flatten and shape the drops into discs. When the edges of the latkes are brown and crispy, about 5 minutes, flip. Cook until the second side is deeply browned, about another 5 minutes. Transfer the latkes to a paper towel-lined plate to drain and sprinkle with salt while still warm. Repeat with the remaining batter.