



Issue 4. January, February, March 2023



NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Together Venture Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is a quarterly digital newsletter that celebrates and honors historical moments observed dates and events in an effort to educate, promote and strengthen diversity at Venture Community Services; Inc.

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INDEX

46 MILLION AMERICANS LIVE IN POVERTY EVERY DAY. POVERTY AWARENESS MONTH.....	1-4
International Holocaust Remembrance Day.....	5-6
A MOMENT IN HISTORY JUNE 21, 1964: THREE CIVIL RIGHTS WORKERS MURDERED IN MISSISSIPPI.....	7-8
HISTORY OF HUMAN RELATIONS MONTH.....	9
WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE.....	10
National Women's History Month.....	11-12
Cover Story: National Women's History Day.....	13-14
Ethnic Equality Month.....	15
International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.....	16-17
"Development Disabilities Awareness Monthacknowledges "Individuals with disabilities and their supporters coming together to create community".....	18
RECIPE: Mandazi (African Donuts).....	19-20

“When we’re talking about diversity, it’s not a box to check. It is a reality that should be deeply felt and held and valued by all of us.”

Ava DuVernay

JANUARY

01

46 MILLION AMERICANS LIVE IN POVERTY EVERY DAY. POVERTY AWARENESS MONTH
BY ELENA BAXTER



It may not be noticeable to the naked eye, but if you take a closer look, you'll soon learn that more than 46 million Americans live in poverty every day (Source: povertyusa.org). It's a heart breaking reality that though America is the land of opportunity, it still suffers from such brokenness as poverty.

The statistics are staggering and quite painful, but even in the darkest hour, there is hope. Here is a list of ten organizations and communities that are not only shedding light on the issue, but also working hard to bring healing to those in America and around the world.

1. Kiva

A non-profit organization with a mission to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty. Leveraging the internet and a worldwide network of microfinance institutions, Kiva lets individuals lend as little as \$25 to help create opportunity around the world. Learn more about how it works. 100% of every dollar you lend on Kiva goes directly towards funding loans; Kiva does not take a cut. Furthermore, Kiva does not charge interest to our Field Partners, who administer the loans. Get involved.

Connect via Facebook and Twitter.

2. Feeding America

Feeding America is a nationwide network of more than 200 food banks that leads the fight against hunger in the United States. Together, they provide food to more than 37 million people through 61,000 food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters in communities across America. Feeding America also supports programs that improve food security among the people they serve; educates the public about the problem of hunger; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. Individuals, charities, businesses and government all have a role in ending hunger. Donate. Volunteer. Advocate. Educate. With such a great organization, together we can all solve hunger. For more information on how you can fight hunger in your community and across the country, visit feedingamerica.org. Connect via Facebook and Twitter

3. Poverty USA

Poverty USA is an initiative of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. CCHD is the domestic anti-poverty program of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, working to break the cycle of poverty by helping people help themselves. Each year CCHD distributes national grants to more than 200 organizations developed by grassroots groups of low-income persons, working in dioceses throughout the country. Since its beginning, CCHD has provided more than 9,000 grants nationwide. Learn more.

Connect via Facebook and Twitter

4. Meals on Wheels Association of America

Senior hunger in America is a monumental problem. The latest research reveals 8.8 million seniors in the United States faced the threat of hunger. Looking at the numbers, it is easy to become discouraged. Looking at the people whom the numbers represent, however, impels us to action and helps develop our plan. Because of the magnitude of the problem, we know that we cannot solve it overnight or with a single project or initiative. Learn more and make an impact. Connect via Facebook and Twitter

5. End Poverty 2015

End poverty by 2015. This is the historic promise 189 world leaders made at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 when they signed onto the Millennium Declaration and agreed to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs are an eight-point road map with measurable targets and clear deadlines for improving the lives of the world's poorest people. World leaders have agreed to achieve the MDGs by 2015. The United Nations Millennium Campaign supports and inspires people from around the world to take action in support of the Millennium Development Goals. Join the UN Millennium Campaign and be part of the generation that puts an end to poverty.

Connect via Facebook and Twitter

6. No Kid Hungry

Nearly 1 in 5 children in America are at risk of hunger, and while their hunger is invisible, the solution is not. No Kid Hungry along with community members seeks to end child hunger in America. Share Our Strength® is a national organization that works hard to make sure no kid in America grows up hungry. They weave together a net of community groups, activists and food

programs to catch children facing hunger and surround them with nutritious food where they live, learn and play.

Connect via Facebook and Twitter

7. Food Bank for New York City

There are 2.6 million New Yorkers who experience difficulty affording food — an astounding number and one that continues to increase as the donated food supply drops to an all-time low and food costs skyrocket. To address this issue, Food Bank procures and distributes food to a network of more than 1,000 community-based member programs citywide, helping to provide 400,000 free meals a day for New Yorkers in need. Learn more and get involved here.

Connect via Facebook and Twitter

8. American Poverty

AmericanPoverty.org is a non-profit alliance of photo-journalists using visual storytelling to raise awareness about “how the other half lives.” Joining us are renowned American writers, filmmakers and educators, all of whom seek to alleviate poverty and make it a national priority. Their philosophy is that, together we are working to dispel stereotypes and encourage actions that can create lasting impact in the lives of disadvantaged people.

Connect via Twitter

9. CARE USA

CARE is a global poverty-fighting organization with an emphasis on women's empowerment. Their mission is to serve individuals and families in the poorest communities in the world. Drawing strength from our global diversity, resources and experience, we promote innovative solutions and are advocates for global responsibility.

Connect via Facebook and Twitter

10. Oxfam International

Oxfam America is a global organization working to right the wrongs of poverty, hunger, and injustice. They save lives, develop long-term solutions to poverty, and campaign for social change. As one of 17 members of the international Oxfam confederation, we work with people in more than 90 countries to create lasting solutions. Learn more and get involved here.

Connect via Facebook and Twitter

Please continue the conversation by sharing how you are fighting poverty and the organizations you sup-

port.

Photo credit: Hands On Blog

FROM THE EDITOR

At Conscious, we are inspired by remarkable people, and so we set out to tell stories that highlight real human interactions and human dignity. You can read more stories like this when you pick up your copy of Conscious Magazine. Subscribe today via our Conscious Shop and sign-up for Conscious Updates.

[HTTPS://CONSCIOUSMAGAZINE.CO/POVERTY-AWARENESS/](https://consciousmagazine.co/poverty-awareness/)



JANUARY
27

The United Nations General Assembly designated January 27—the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau—as International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

On this annual day of commemoration, the UN urges every member state to honor the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust and millions of other victims of Nazism and to develop educational programs to help prevent future genocides.

<https://www.ushmm.org/remember/international-holocaust-remembrance-day>



FEBRUARY

07

A MOMENT IN HISTORY
JUNE 21, 1964: THREE CIVIL RIGHTS WORKERS MURDERED
IN MISSISSIPPI

Time Periods: People's Movement: 1961 - 1974

Themes: African American, Civil Rights Movements,
Organizing, Racism & Racial Identity

On June 21, 1964, James Chaney, Michael Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman were tortured and murdered by the KKK with help from the deputy sheriff near Philadelphia in Neshoba County, Mississippi.

The three young men had traveled to Neshoba County (from the Freedom Summer orientation in Oxford, Ohio) to investigate the burning of Mt. Zion Methodist Church, which had been a site of a CORE Freedom School.

They were killed defending the right to learn and human rights for all.

While their case received national attention (thanks to grass-roots organizers), there were more people murdered in Mississippi while seeking basic democratic and human rights. A few of those stories are listed in Related Resources below.

In fact, while investigators dragged and searched the rivers, they uncovered the bodies of eight African Americans: Herbert Oarsby, a 14-year-old who was wearing a Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) t-shirt; Henry Hezekiah Dee and Eddie Moore (both 19-years-old); and five unidentified men.

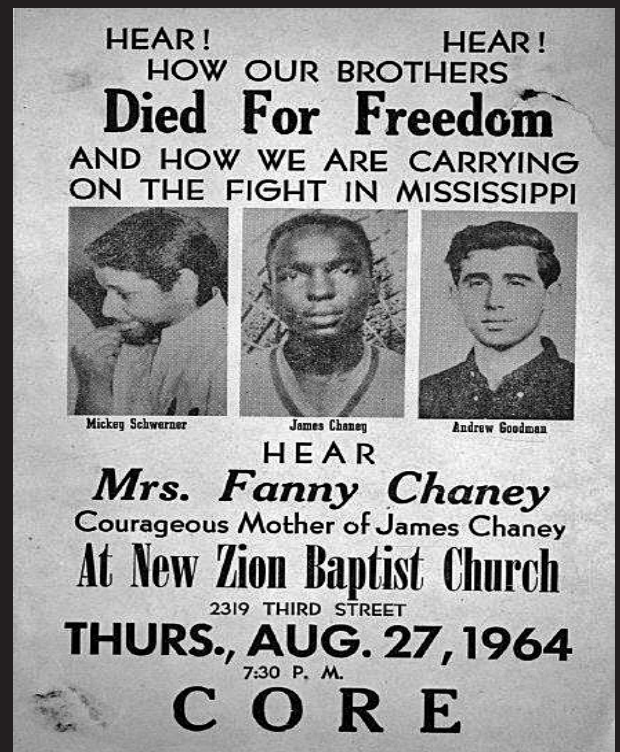
Throughout the rest of June and July, authorities (including President Lyndon Johnson), claimed that the disappearance of Chaney, Goodman, and Schwerner could be a Civil Rights Movement publicity stunt.

Their bodies were found, buried in a dam site in Neshoba County, on August 4, 1964.

In 1980, Ronald Reagan launched his general election campaign with a speech lauding "states' rights" outside Philadelphia, Mississippi, within walking distance from the earthen dam where the three civil rights workers had been buried.

See the Democracy Now! broadcast: "After Over Four Decades, Justice Still Eludes Family of 3 Civil Rights Workers Slain in Mississippi Burning Killings."

<https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih/chaney-goodman-schwerner-murdered/>



Photos Courtesy of <https://www.crmvet.org/images/imgfs.htm>



HISTORY OF HUMAN RELATIONS MONTH

National Human Relations Month is an annual celebration that is observed every February. The month-long celebration is observed with a myriad of events such as seminars, programs, and training that aim to strengthen human relationships and build a community where we can rely on each other. National Human Relations Month celebrates the noble values of social justice, equality, and diversity that support human relationships. The celebrations are observed by workplaces and universities that are entrusted with the responsibility of fair and equal representation of all communities. You can celebrate the month by raising awareness, getting your organization to observe the celebration and more.

National Human Relations Month celebrates unity in diversity. This is the month to cherish our uniqueness and how these elements make us stronger for the better and carry the learnings from the month to the rest of the year. Workplaces celebrate National Human Relations Month as a way to acknowledge the various identities and representations at the organization. If you work in the Human Resource team at an organization, this is a great time to take cognizance of workplace diversity and how you can make the organization more inclusive.

National Human Relations Month is also the time to refamiliarize employees with labor laws, their rights and privileges, health and safety, and workplace ethics. Honesty in conduct at workplaces can positively impact employees and encourage them to do their best and reach their professional potential.

States across America organize events where H.R. professionals from different organizations come together to discuss human resource policies and what they can do at organizational levels to make the workplaces inclusive spaces for employees of every community. National Human Relations Month aims to create a world where everyone is treated with respect, given equal opportunities to succeed, and assured fairness when in need of legal help.

<https://nationaltoday.com/human-relations-month/>



WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

World Day of Social Justice is observed annually on February 20. Internationally, the world is plagued with unfortunate issues that prohibit millions of individuals from living a fair life. Many of the world's population, through no fault of their own, are deprived of basic facilities, such as homes, jobs, healthcare, education, nutrition, and more.

It must be the responsibility of the privileged to ensure that we can create a just world where social justice is a norm. If you want to contribute in an extremely meaningful way, you could enter the law profession – law school is expensive but here are some law scholarships that may help.

The world is facing significant issues including serious financial crises, high unemployment rates, poverty, exclusion among societies, discrimination, and lack of access to facilities that prohibit full participation in the global economy for developing countries. Back in 1995, Copenhagen, Denmark, hosted the World Summit for Social Development. This resulted in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. Over 100 political leaders took a pledge to alleviate poverty, work towards full employment and create stable, safe, and just societies. They also decided that they needed to put people at the center of the development plans.

In 2005 in New York, the U.N.'s member states reviewed the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action at a session of the Commission for Social Development. They agreed to commit to advancing social development. Two years later on November 26, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly declared that starting from the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, February 20 will be celebrated annually as the World Day of Social Justice. On June 10, 2008, The International Labour Organization adopted the I.L.O. Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

Organizations across the world including the United Nations and the International Labour Office, make statements on the importance of social justice for people. Organizations also prepare and present plans for tackling issues and promoting social justice. Trade unions also participate and do their bit in marking this day. The Russian General Confederation of Trade Unions has in fact declared the common slogan as 'Social Justice and Decent Life for All!'

February

20

10

March

11

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Women's History Month is a celebration of women's contributions to history, culture and society and has been observed annually in the month of March in the United States since 1987. Women's History Month 2023 will take place from Wednesday, March 1 - Friday, March 31, 2023.

Why Do We Celebrate Women's History Month?

Women's History Month is a dedicated month to reflect on the often-overlooked contributions of women to United States history. From Abigail Adams to Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth to Rosa Parks, the timeline of women's history milestones stretches back to the founding of the United States.

The actual celebration of Women's History Month grew out of a weeklong celebration of women's contributions to culture, history and society organized by the school district of Sonoma, California, in 1978. Presentations were given at dozens of schools, hundreds of students participated in a "Real Woman" essay contest and a parade was held in downtown Santa Rosa.

A few years later, the idea caught on within communities, school districts and organizations across the country. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National Women's History Week. The U.S. Congress followed suit the next year, passing a resolution establishing a national celebration. Six years later, the National Women's History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March.

International Women's Day, a global celebration of the economic, political and social achievements of women, took place for the first time on March 8, 1911. Many countries around the world celebrate the holiday with demonstrations, educational initiatives and customs such as presenting women with gifts and flowers.

The United Nations has sponsored International Women's Day since 1975. When adopting its resolution on the observance of International Women's Day, the United Nations General Assembly cited the following reasons: "To recognize the fact that securing peace and social progress and the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms require the active participation, equality and development of women; and to acknowledge the contribution of women to the strengthening of international peace and security."

<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/womens-history-month>





MARCH

COVER STORY NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY DAY

08

International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the historical, cultural, and political achievements of women. The day also observed in support of taking action against gender inequality around the world. We all know the world couldn't run without women (we mean, just listen to Beyoncé). This is the day to appreciate their efforts! Organizations large and small come together to show women just how valuable they are in today's society. Also make sure to help women around you find resources on scholarships available for women from around the world to help them spread their wings and fly higher.

Susan B. Anthony was a political activist and an advocate of women's rights. After the Civil War, she fought for the 14th Amendment that was meant to grant all naturalized and native-born Americans citizenship in the hope that it would include suffrage rights. Although the 14th Amendment was ratified in 1868, it still didn't secure their vote. In 1869, the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA) was founded by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony to continue the fight for women's rights.

In the early 1900s, women were experiencing pay inequality, a lack of voting rights, and they were being overworked. In response to all of this, 15,000 women marched through New York City in 1908 to demand their rights. In 1909, the first National Women's Day was observed in accordance with a declaration by the Socialist Party of America. This was celebrated on the last Sunday of February until 1913.

An International Women's Conference was organized in August 1910 by Clara Zetkin, a German suffragist and leader in the Women's Office. Zetkin proposed a special Women's Day to be organized annually and International Women's Day was honored the following year in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland, with more than one million attending the rallies. On August 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment was ratified and white women were granted the right to vote in the U.S.

The liberation movement took place in the 1960s and the effort led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act, allowing all women the right to vote. When the internet became more commonplace, feminism and the fight against gender inequality experienced a resurgence. Now we celebrate International Women's Day each year as we push continuously with the hope of creating a completely equal society.

<https://nationaltoday.com/international-womens-day/>



ETHNIC EQUALITY MONTH

Ethnic Equality Month is celebrated in February every year. It is a period to recognize the similarities all people have, yet acknowledge, appreciate and respect the differences in all of us. So no matter what race you are, or what ethnicity you belong to, everyone is equal and deserves equal rights and equal opportunities. Ethnic Equality Month is a good time to reflect and challenge ourselves, as a group and individually. It brings to light the unfortunate biases that still exist in our society, how far we've come in achieving equality, and what each one of us can do to contribute to something the world should be striving to achieve; social equality and justice.

Ethnic equality has been in the conversation for as long as colonization started. People of different races or ethnicity co-habiting brings out similarities between everyone but also brings out the differences, which should be appreciated. There have been a lot of mishaps over the years related to ethnic equality, but there have been positives as well. Recognizing that there are issues to be solved is a very big step when it comes to breaking bias. The next step is to look for practical ways to solve these issues. Achieving equality is the goal for everyone. We're not there yet but we are continually striving towards it every single day. One thing that is clear is that it is a journey that will only be a success if everyone contributes within their abilities.

Ethnic diversity means people have been socialized through different customs, beliefs, traditions, languages, and experiences so it shapes the way they feel and behave. Leveraging these diverse perspectives makes the World a more dynamic place. To make the world a more dynamic place, we have to be more conscious of our individual biases, stereotypes, or the prejudices we may sometimes have about other individuals or groups of people. To recognize these thought patterns, you have to look at yourself and think about what shapes your actions and decisions. The process can be exhausting but it's worth it.

Continuous efforts such as the establishment of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), an African-American civil rights organization in the U.S., founded in 1942, play a pivotal role in achieving equality for not just different races, but ethnicities as well. Its stated mission is "to bring about equality for all people regardless of race, creed, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or ethnic background".

<https://nationaltoday.com/ethnic-equality-month/#:~:text=Ethnic%20Equality%20Month%20is%20celebrated%20in%20February%20every%20year.>



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE OF THE VICTIMS OF SLAVERY AND THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

There is much that we know about the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, and today is a day we remember: the crime against humanity; the unprecedented mass human trafficking; the degrading economic transactions and unspeakable human rights violations.

But there is also much that we do not know, and today is a day we learn. Behind the facts and figures are millions of human stories. Stories of untold suffering and pain. Stories of families and communities ripped apart. But also stories of awe-inspiring courage and defiance against the cruelty of oppressors.

We will never know every act of resistance – great or small – that slowly but surely triumphed over injustice, repression and enslavement. But these accounts are crucial to our understanding of a past whose most pernicious and persistent legacy continues to blight our present: racism.

The International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is a time to learn about and reflect on such stories. To pay tribute to the millions of Africans who were torn from their homelands and communities. And to stand up in solidarity against racism everywhere.

Today, people of African descent continue to confront racial discrimination, marginalization and exclusion. The political, economic and structural power imbalances rooted in colonial rule, enslavement and exploitation, still deny equality of opportunity and justice.

On this International Day, let us stand united against racism and together build societies based on dignity, equality and solidarity.

The Ark of Return is a powerful reminder of the tragic legacy of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

An initiative of the Caribbean Community and the African Union, it serves as an opportunity for reflection on the more than 18 million men, women and children that were enslaved and transported in harsh conditions to the Americas.

<https://www.un.org/en/rememberslavery/observance>

Years ago, I visited Goree Island in Senegal, which was the largest slave-trading centre on the African coast from the 15th to the 19th century.

I saw the small spaces, imagining the crowded rooms where the enslaved persons were packed.

I will never forget the feeling of sorrow and distress thinking on those who went through that very small door overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. A point of no return.

The Ark of Return, as Goree Island, seeks to remind us of the brutality of slavery and the slave trade.

Slavery was not only a dreadful individual ordeal, but a cultural trauma whereby a group of people were subjected to such inhuman pain and torture that it dehumanized their existence, their group identity, values, feelings, and their cultural worldview.

The theme of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade this year is “Stories of Courage: Resistance to Slavery and Unity against Racism”.

It is important to learn from history and listen to the stories of those who were stolen from their homeland, children who were snatched away from their families, daughters who were raped, sons who were sold, fathers who were emasculated and mothers who were tortured till they dropped dead.

We must discuss the legacy of slavery, especially in the marginalization of persons of African descent, who are still denied justice and equality. We must stand in solidarity, united against these inequalities. This dark chapter of our history should never be whitewashed.

Let us raise our voices as we continue to fight against racism and prejudice around the world.

<https://www.un.org/en/rememberslavery/observance/2022#pga>





Sheila Swift
Venture Community Services
Individual Supports
Coordinator

“DEVELOPMENT DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH
ACKNOWLEDGES “INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND
THEIR SUPPORTERS COMING TOGETHER TO CREATE
COMMUNITY”

Sheila has worked with individuals with developmental disabilities throughout her whole career. For Sheila, working in this field is not a job but a passion. In 2018, she was the recipient of the “Outstanding Direct Support Professional” Award. The following interview demonstrates her desire to remain focused on improving the quality of life for the individuals she supports.

“DEVELOPMENT DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH ACKNOWLEDGES “IN-
DIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR SUPPORTERS COMING
TOGETHER TO CREATE COMMUNITY”

1. What is your work philosophy in regards to this statement?

I believe it is very important to have a strong support system with resources within the community for trips, social groups, activities and volunteering. Making them part of the community requires you to assist them in finding interests that line up with their financial status. So many things are segregated and this makes it challenging to find integrated programming.

2. Have you witnessed what can happen to an individual if they are denied access to this?

Sad to say - yes. I have experienced this in working with one of my individuals. I once supported a gentleman who was living in horrific living conditions. Through supports, we were successful in getting him better housing, access to better resources, and I assisted him with his money management (paying his own bills).

3. What successes have you experienced in creating such a community?

Finding employment, teaching skills to live independently. Help with finding community resources. Having Individuals working, volunteering and being a part of the community, which changes what people think of people with disabilities.

Volunteering Opportunities: Individuals selling spice bags (Salvation Army (Webster) (Publick House), membership at their local libraries, Meals on Wheels (Sturbridge), Delivered books to home-bound people, and volunteered at the Worcester Food Bank.

RECIPE MANDAZI (AFRICAN DONUTS)

Mandazis are amazingly soft, triangle-shaped donuts famous in East Africa. They are excellent with a cup of tea or coffee. The dash of cardamom adds an authentic taste, making them different from regular donuts. You can serve them with honey or jam. Mandazis can also be served with curry.

Prep Time:

15 mins

Cook Time:

15 mins

Additional Time:

1 hrs

Total Time:

1 hrs 30 mins

Servings:

18

Yield:

18 donuts

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup warm milk

¼ cup vegetable oil

¼ cup fine white sugar

1 medium egg

2 teaspoons instant yeast

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground cardamom

3 ½ cups all-purpose flour, sifted

2 quarts vegetable oil for frying, or as needed

DIRECTIONS:

Combine milk, 1/4 cup vegetable oil, sugar, egg, instant yeast, salt, and cardamom in a large bowl. Mix in flour, 1 cup at a time, until dough comes together and is easily handled. Knead dough on a flat work surface until no longer sticky. Return dough to the bowl; cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

Press dough down gently. Knead briefly, then divide dough into 4 equal portions. Roll each portion into a ball; keep covered with a cloth to prevent dough from drying.

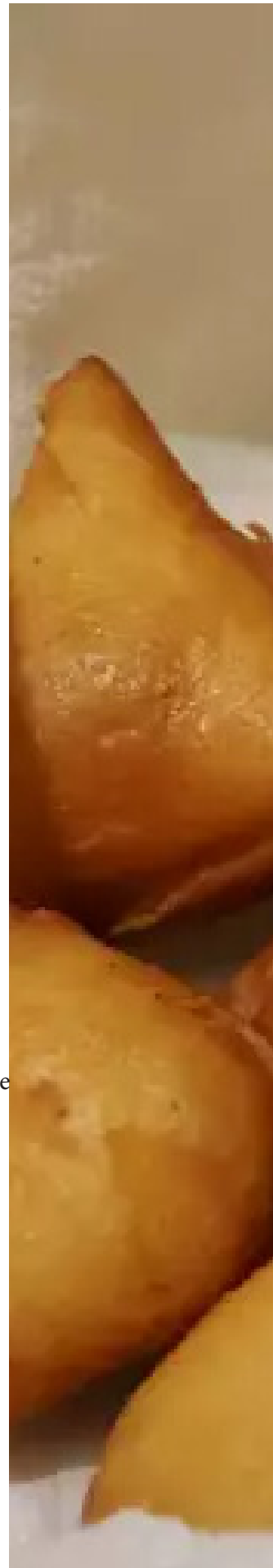
Roll 1 dough ball into a 1/3-inch-thick circle on a floured work surface. Cut into 4 triangles using a pizza cutter; cover with a cloth. Repeat with remaining dough balls.

Heat 2-inches oil in a deep fryer or large saucepan over medium heat.

Working in batches, fry dough in hot oil until puffed, 1 to 2 minutes. Flip dough and continue frying until golden brown, 1 to 2 minutes more. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain.

Tips

Substitute shortening for vegetable oil if preferred.





<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/262205/mandazi-african-donuts/>



Together
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Diversity
Equity
Inclusion

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