

# GRDIA QUARTERLY



## Diwali Dazzle!

In October, we celebrated the Festival of Lights, Diwali. This festival is the biggest and most important holiday of the year in South Asian culture. Celebrated across the globe, it's a joyous celebration of the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance.

Right here in Glen Ridge, several Indian-American families created Diwali-focused programming for our elementary schools, such as fun crafts and activities, and an incredible Diwali block party on Chestnut Hill Place, which featured an overview about the festival, delicious food, craft activities, and firecrackers. These celebrations helped our Indian-American students and families show their pride in their culture and helped our neighbors learn about the importance of the holiday in the South Asian community.

More than 25 New Jersey school districts, including Montclair, Millburn, and Livingston, now recognize Diwali as a holiday. For more information or to sign the petition to make Diwali an official holiday for our district, please click [here](#). Thanks for your support!



# Get to Know our GR Community

Tricia Akinwande, Newly Elected BOE Member

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Tricia Akinwande and her family have been a part of the Glen Ridge community for approximately 10 years. They have one child who is currently at Glen Ridge Middle School and one "happy-go-lucky" dog named Puppacino.

Tricia was born in Chicago and was raised in Philadelphia and South Jersey before moving north to attend Seton Hall University where she received her BA in Business Management. She's worked in corporate America most of her career and has also been an entrepreneur, co-founding a handmade bath and body products company.

Tricia has volunteered for several nonprofits and community organizations, including the Girls & Boys Club of Newark, Hudson Cradle in Jersey City, Girls on the Run/Essex County, and several others. She has also served on the nonprofit board for Jersey Cares. In addition to her engagement in surrounding areas, Tricia is a passionate advocate for our schools and community and is a founding board member of the GRDIA.

This past November, Tricia was elected to our town's Board of Education. In a message to the community she said, "Thank you to everyone who came out to vote in this year's election. Voting is a core part of our democracy and it's encouraging to see the number of candidates who stepped forward to serve. I look forward to serving on the Glen Ridge Board of Education for the upcoming term beginning January 2023 and working with the fellow board members, administration and school community to address the issues we face collectively."

We wish her a successful start in her new role with the Board of Education!



**GET INVOLVED!**

Film Participant  
[SURVEY](#)

Film Crew Volunteers  
[SIGN UP](#)

## Welcome to Glen Ridge Film Casting Call

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GRDIA is the recipient of the GR 2022 Film Fund Grant. We are excited to embark on a short film project that will capture "getting to know" our Glen Ridge community through a series of interviews and town features. We look forward to sharing the unique and diverse community that Glen Ridge has to offer.

We are in need of film participants and film crew volunteers of all ages! If interested click on the links to the left.

# Community Service

Thank you to [Dumpling Diplomacy](#) and [Toni's Kitchen](#) for including the GRDIA in a Dumpling Day of Service. GRDIA provided 10 volunteers for this wonderful dumpling-making event. It was a fun family activity, and the dumplings were served that day at Toni's Kitchen's on-site grocery distribution and hot meal program. The Toni's Kitchen guests enjoyed the wonderful addition to the regular services!



## Holidays in Glen Ridge



Thanks to the town for including Hanukkah and Kwanzaa decorations alongside the Christmas themed municipal vehicles in their Santa Parade!

Have a safe and fun holiday season and we will see you in the New Year!

The mission of GRDIA is to create and foster an environment where everyone feels welcome and included in Glen Ridge. The community-led coalitions of GR Black Diversity and Inclusion Association and GR Pan Asian American Association are part of GRDIA, which continues to evolve and welcomes new constituencies to foster DEI.

## Save the date

Martin Luther King, Jr., Day of Service  
January 15, 2023

GRDIA will be planning a MLK Day of Service Project. Stay tuned for details!

Lunar New Year  
January 28, 2023, 11-3  
Montclair Art Museum

GRDIA is proud to be a co-presenter of AAPI Montclair's LNY celebration! Lunar New Year is a time of hope. Family, friends, and neighbors come together to rejoice in new beginnings as we look ahead to a peaceful and prosperous year. To learn more and grab your tickets, [click here!](#)

### Corrections

In our Fall edition, Hispanic Heritage activities celebrated at GRHS were incorrectly attributed to RAS. We apologize for the misidentification.