

# Ethnic Observances

## **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR - January 15th**

Twenty years after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. proclaimed to the world his dream for equality, Public Law 98-144 was enacted, designating the third Monday in January as a Federal holiday commemorating Dr. King's birthday. The King Holiday honors the life and contributions of America's greatest champion of racial justice and equality, the leader who not only dreamed of a color-blind society, but who also led a movement that achieved historic reforms to help make it a reality. George Washington is the only other American whose birthday has been designated as a Federal holiday.

- Martin Luther King, Jr. <http://www.thekingcenter.com>

## **AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH - February**

The Civil Rights Acts of the 1960s were great breakthroughs. Not only did they afford African-Americans legal rights that every American should have, they provided for enforcement of the anti-discrimination laws of the federal government. By the early 1970s, the military had instituted directives, policies, and training on race relations and equal opportunity.

- [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People \(NAACP\)](#)
- [National Urban League](#)
- [Blacks in Government \(BIG\)](#)

## **WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH - March**

American women of every race, class, and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways. They have played and continue to play a critical economic, cultural, and social role in every sphere of life by constituting a significant portion of the labor force, working inside and outside of the home, and by providing the majority of the volunteer labor force. Against the odds, women have earned respect and admiration from our nation.

- [Federally Employed Women](#)
- [Women's Hall of Fame](#)
- [National Women's History Project](#)
- [US Army Women's Museum](#)

**"DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE" of Victims of the Holocaust (One week incorporating Ha'Shoah) - April 23 to April 30th**

The United States Holocaust Memorial Council (USHMC) was established in 1980 by public Law 96-388. The council coordinates an annual, national civic commemoration of the Days of Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust, held in the Nation's capital. Ceremonies are conducted throughout the U.S. during the annual Days of Remembrance, proclaimed by the USHMC for a designated one-week period (Sunday to Sunday) each spring between mid-April and Mid-May.

- [United States Holocaust Memorial Museum](#)

### **ASIAN-PACIFIC ISLANDER MONTH - May**

Asian-Pacific Americans have been in the United States for over 150 years; however, little is known about their history. To better understand the variety of backgrounds, traditions, and paradigms of these vital members of our society is to better understand what makes America itself great as a nation of immigrants. "Asian-Pacific-American" affixes a common label to a vast array of ethnic groups. The common American perception tends to lump all Asians together into one racial group, without distinct ethnic and cultural differences. The term actually identifies individuals from at least 29 different countries, each with a unique historical and cultural heritage of its own. There are many differences in language, food, and religions among Asian-Pacific-Americans as among the Greeks, Irish, Italians, or Germans.

- [Federal Asian Pacific America Council \(FAPAC\)](#)
- [Asian Pacific American Heritage Council](#)

### **WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY - August 26th**

On Aug 26, 1920, the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote was certified as part of the U.S. Constitution. Referred to as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, it states, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." The U.S. Congress designated August 26 as "Women's Equality Day" in 1971 to honor women's continuing efforts toward equality.

### **NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH - 15 September - 15 October**

Every year since 1968, by presidential proclamation, a week has been set aside to honor the contributions of Hispanic-Americans. Recognizing that a week was not long enough to recognize the Hispanic population's significant achievements and contributions, Congress voted in 1989 to expand this week to a month-long celebration, known as National Hispanic Heritage Month.

- [National IMAGE, Inc](#)
- [League of United Latin American Citizens](#)

### **AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH - November**

The term "Native American" is used to describe 504 recognized tribes, including 197 Alaskan Native groups such as the Eskimos and the Aleuts. About 100 of these tribes have become extinct since the arrival of Europeans on American soil. There are roughly 300 Indian reservations in the United States, the largest of which is the Navajo Reservation, which extends throughout 16 million acres in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. The Native American people are the only political group specifically identified in the United States constitution.

- [Gathering of Nations](#)