



EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CALENDAR

FEBRUARY – 2022

MONTH-LONG OBSERVANCES:

Black History Month

Celebrates African American History. The study of black history is greatly owed to Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who first launched "Negro History Week" in 1926. February was chosen because Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, two men prominent in eliminating slavery, were both born in February. Since 1976, the month has been designated to remember the contributions of people of the African diaspora. In December of 1995, the Parliament of Canada recognized February as Black History Month following a motion introduced by the first African Canadian woman elected to Parliament, Jean Augustine. The presence of peoples of African descent in Canada dates back farther than Samuel de Champlain's first voyage down the St. Lawrence River.

Hopi Holy Cycle

January and February. Buffalo dances are performed in Hopi reserves. Days may vary according to community.

February 1: Chinese New Year

The year of the Tiger. This is the year 4720 in the Chinese Lunar calendar and the most important holiday. A festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year in the traditional lunisolar Chinese calendar. Lunar New Year, one of the most sacred of all traditional Chinese holidays, a time of family reunion and celebration. The Lunar New Year is also celebrated at this time in Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and Mongolia.

February 1: National Freedom Day

National Freedom Day, which celebrates the signing of the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery in the United States in 1865

February 1: St. Brigid of Kildare

A feast day for St. Brigid celebrated by some Christian denominations

February 1: Seollal (Korea)

The Korean New Year lasts three days. During this time, many Koreans visit family, perform ancestral rites, eat traditional food and play folk games. Additionally, children often receive money from their elders.

February 1: Setsubun-Sai (Japan)

Known as Bean Throwing Night. Beans are thrown to protect against demons with shouts of "Devil out, Good Fortune in".

February 1: Abolition of Slavery (Mauritius)

The struggle for freedom of the slaves of Mauritius during the Dutch period between 1638 and 1710 is remembered and honoured.

February 1 and 2: Imbolc (Wicca)

A Gaelic traditional festival marking the beginning of spring. It signals the first stirrings of life within the womb of mother earth. Corn dolls are burned as offerings to the sun to hasten his return.

February 2: Candlemas

A Christian holiday that celebrates three occasions according to Christian belief: the presentation of the child Jesus, Jesus' first entry into the temple, and Virgin Mary's purification

February 3: St. Blaise Day

The Blessing of the Throats. The feast day of St. Blaise of Sebaste celebrated by the Roman Catholic Church and some Eastern Catholic Churches

February 3: Setsubun-Sai

Beginning of spring, the day before the beginning of spring in Japan, it is celebrated annually as part of the Spring Festival

February 5: Vasant Panchami (Hindu)

The Hindu festival that highlights the coming of spring. On this day, Hindus worship Saraswati Devi, the goddess of wisdom, knowledge, music, art, and culture. Yellow coloured clothes are symbolically worn. Even the food is coloured yellow by using saffron.

February 6: Waitangi Day (New Zealand)

The day commemorates the signing of a treaty at Waitangi on February 6, 1840 by a group of Maori chiefs and the British Government. It honours the rights of the British Crown and the rights of the Maori people, which are now in the process of being reclaimed.

February 8: Boy Scout Day (Canada, US)

William Boyce, a Chicago publisher, founded the Boy Scouts of America on February 10, 1910. The purpose was to promote, through organization, and cooperation with other agencies, the ability of boys to do things for themselves and others, to train them in Scoutcraft and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance and kindred virtues.

February 11: National Foundation Day (Japan)

A national holiday for Japanese people to remind themselves of the nation's founding and foster their love for the nation.

February 15: National Day (Serbia)

A holiday celebrated to commemorate the outbreak of the First Serbian Uprising in 1804, which evolved into the Serbian Revolution against Ottoman rule. The revolution ultimately resulted in the recognition of Serbia's National by the Ottoman Empire (formally in 1817, *de jure* in 1835). On the same day in 1835, during the rule of Miloš Obrenović, the first modern Serbian constitution was adopted in Kragujevac, known as the Sretenje Constitution or 'Candlemas Constitution'. National Day is a public national holiday, and official celebrations last for two days, every 15 February.

February 14: Valentine's Day

A Western Christian feast day honoring one or two early saints named Valentinus. This holiday is typically associated with romantic love and celebrated by people expressing their love with gifts.

February 15: Nirvana Day (Buddhist)

Also known as Parinirvana, this annual festival remembers the death of the Buddha after he reached Nirvana. Parinirvana Day (or Nirvana Day), the commemoration of Buddha's death at the age of 80, when he reached the zenith of Nirvana; February 8 is an alternative date of observance

February 15: Lantern Festival

The first significant feast after the Chinese New Year; participants enjoy watching paper lanterns illuminate the sky on the night of the event

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February 16: Independence Day (Lithuania)

Lithuania's tumultuous history, combined with its sense of deep national pride, has led it to become the independent country that it is today. Two days of independence are celebrated: the Restoration of the State Day on February 16th and the Restoration of

Independence Day on March 11. Though an independent country since the 13th century, in the 18th century, the Russian Empire assumed rule of Lithuania. During WWI, German troops occupied the region while marching to Russia, and they maintained control until the Russian revolution in 1917. At this time, Germany gave Lithuanians the choice to be aligned with either Germany or Russia. Ignoring these options, the Act of Independence of Lithuania was signed, proclaiming independence on February 16, 1918 (the Restoration of the State Day). Independence appeared to be only temporary, as Lithuania was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940 during WWII. Following WWII, the Soviet Union still occupied Lithuania (and the other Baltic States of Latvia and Estonia). In a show of solidarity against the Soviet Union, approximately two million people from Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia joined hands to form the Baltic Way, which was a 600-km-long human chain that connected Vilnius (the capital of Lithuania) to Tallinn (the capital of Estonia). This revolutionary, peaceful demonstration that took place on August 23, 1989, eventually restored freedom to Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. In 1990, Lithuania was allowed to hold a democratic election, and the elected Parliament declared independence from the Soviet Union on March 11, 1990, considered the Restoration of Independence Day. This decision, however, was not without consequences, as Soviet forces persecuted Lithuanians until the Soviet Union finally recognized Lithuania's independence in 1991. Celebration of these two independence days are marked with the closure of businesses, and people dress in national colors – yellow, green, and red – or wave flags to show their pride.

February 15: National Flag of Canada Day

At the stroke of noon on February 15, 1965, Canada's red and white maple leaf flag was raised for the very first time on Parliament Hill. On the same day in 1996, [National Flag of Canada Day](#) was declared. Our national flag is a symbol that unites all Canadians and reflects the common values we hold so dear — equality, diversity and inclusion.

February 16: Maghi-Purnima

A Hindu festival especially for worshippers of Lord Vishnu. Devotees take a holy bath on this day and carry out charity work.

February 16: Magha Puja Day

Also known as Maka Bucha. A Buddhist holiday that marks an event early in the Buddha's teaching life when a group of 1,250 enlightened saints ordained by the Buddha gathered to pay their respect to him. It is celebrated on various dates in different countries.

February 17: Ash Wednesday

The first day of Lent on the Christian calendar. Its name is derived from the symbolic use of ashes to signify penitence. It takes place immediately after the excesses of the two days of Carnival that take place in Northern Europe and parts of Latin America and the Caribbean.

February 18: Gambia Independence Day

Independence Day is a public holiday in The Gambia. This is the National Day of The Gambia and marks independence from Britain on February 18, 1965. The main celebration of Independence Day is held at McCarthy square in the country's capital of Banjul. It involves a procession of the army, civil servants, schoolchildren, teachers and others in front of the President and other dignitaries.

February 20: World Day of Social Justice

Observed as World Day of Social Justice since 2009. An underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations is defined as Social Justice according to the official website of the United Nations Organization. The principles of Social Justice are upheld to promote gender equality or the rights of indigenous people and migrants. Promoting development and human dignity through Social Justice is the core value of the UN. The UN website claims that the organization is committed to social justice and collective development as it is apparent in the adoption of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (DSJFG) by the International Labour Organization (ILO). This declaration is focused upon guaranteeing fair and just outcomes for everyone through social protection, justice, employment, fundamental principles, social dialogue, and just rights at the workplace. The purpose of the day is to raise your voice against social injustice and to promote social justice throughout the world. The objective of the day is to bring the various communities globally closer and together that can help to eliminate poverty, physical and gender discrimination, racism, religious discrimination, illiteracy, and biases, etc. If societies of the planet become pure from the mentioned curses, only then a diverse global culture can emerge where everyone has equal opportunities and everyone has acceptance for others.

February 21: Family Day

This holiday celebrates the importance of families and family life to people and their communities.

February 21: Louis Riel Day

He was the famous Metis leader who in 1885 led a rebellion and lost against the Canadian authorities because he feared the settlers would take more Metis land away. Today his name is a symbol for Native independence.

February 21: International Mother Language Day

Recognizes that languages and multilingualism can advance inclusion and the Sustainable Development Goals' focus on leaving no one behind. UNESCO believes education, based on the first language or mother tongue, must begin from the early years, as early childhood care and education is the foundation of learning. This year's observance is a call on policymakers, educators and teachers, parents and families to scale up their commitment to multilingual education, and inclusion in education to advance education recovery in the context of COVID-19. This effort also contributes to the United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022-2032), for which UNESCO is the lead agency, and which places multilingualism at the heart of indigenous peoples' development.

February 22: Abu Simbel Festival (Egypt)

Built by Ramses II, his temple is angled so that the inner sanctum lights up twice a year, once on the anniversary of his rise to the throne and on October 22, celebrating his birthday. Crowds pack in the temple before sunrise to watch the shafts of light illuminate the statues of Ramses, Ra and Amon.

February 22: Girl Guides Thinking Day (Canada, USA)

This is the joint birthday of Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and his wife Olave who became the World Chief Guide.

February 22: Independence Day (Saint Lucia)

Independence was finally achieved on February 22, 1979, with Saint Lucia remaining a parliamentary democracy within the Commonwealth.

February 23: Heisei Emperor's Birthday (Japan)

This is the current Emperor's birthday. His reign has been named Heisei (Succeed at Peace).

February 24: Independence Day (Estonia)

A national holiday in Estonia marking the anniversary of the Estonian Declaration of Independence in 1918. It is commonly celebrated with concerts, parades and parties. It is the national day of Estonia

February 25: People Power Day (Philippines)

Commemorates the bloodless revolution in 1986 in which President Ferdinand Marcos was toppled from power.

February 25: National Day (Kuwait)

Held every year and also known as **the Day of Liberation from the 1990 Gulf War** on the 26th of February. The Kuwaiti flag reminds the people of unity and pride as one nation.

February 25 to March 1: Intercalary Days or Ayyám-i-Há (Bahá'í)

Celebrated by people of the Bahá'í faith. At this time, days are added to the Bahá'í calendar to maintain their solar calendar. Intercalary days are observed with gift-giving, special acts of charity, and preparation for the fasting that precedes the New Year.

February 26: Anti-Bullying Day (Canada)

Encourage everyone to practice kindness and wear pink to symbolize that you do not tolerate bullying.

February 27: Meatfare Sunday

The Sunday of the Last Judgment, traditionally the last day of eating meat before Easter for Orthodox Christians

February 27: Independence Day (Dominican Republic)

Dominicans pay tribute to their Founding Fathers at the Puerta del Conde in Santo Domingo, the president of the country gives a speech broadcasted to the whole nation, and people hang Dominican flags from their balconies and eat traditional dishes such as bacalao and mangu.

February 28: Kalevala Day (Finland)

Elias Lonnrot, a country doctor, folklorist and philologist compiled the Kalevala, Finland's national epic in 1835. This day is observed country wide with lectures, parades and recitations to honour him.