



## **EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CALENDAR**

### **OCTOBER – 2022**

#### **MONTH LONG OBSERVANCES:**

➤ **National Disability Employment Awareness Month**

This observance was launched in 1945 when the US Congress declared the first week in October as “National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week.” In 1998, the week was extended to a month and renamed. The annual event draws attention to employment barriers that still need to be addressed. In Canada, the National Disability Employment Awareness Month was established to increase awareness of the positive outcomes of hiring persons with disabilities in Canada. This October, employers are encouraged to take part in a nationwide campaign that highlights the positive contributions that employees with disabilities make to Canadian workplaces. The Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities was introduced in 1997 and provides \$40 million annually in funding to organizations to assist persons with disabilities to prepare for, obtain and maintain employment, thereby increasing their economic independence and participation in the labour force. The program is designed to help Canadians with disabilities who have little or no labour market attachment and, therefore, would not normally be eligible for the programs offered under Employment Insurance Part II. The program has both national and regional streams.

➤ **National Polish American Heritage Month**

Dedicated to honouring Polish heritage, celebrating when Polish settlers first arrived in Jamestown, VA in 1608

➤ **LGBTQ+ History Month**

A US observance started in 1994 to recognize lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer history and the history of the gay rights movement.

➤ **Global Diversity Awareness Month**

A month to celebrate and increase awareness about the diversity of cultures and ethnicities and the positive impact diversity can have on society.

➤ **Black History Month** (United Kingdom, Ireland, Netherlands)

The month was first celebrated in October 1987 as part of African Jubilee Year. The decision to make this an annual event each October was endorsed by the

Association of London Authorities. It has since grown to recognize and embrace the contributions and traditions of other black communities.

➤ **Women's History Month**

Established in 1992 by the Government of Canada, this special month provides an opportunity to learn more about women's historic accomplishments and their contributions to Canadian society.

➤ **Latin American Heritage Month**

Proclaimed by the Parliament of Canada on June 21, 2018 this month is an opportunity for Canadians to recognize the valuable contribution of members of the Latin American community to this country's social, economic, political and cultural fabric.

**September 26 - October 5: Navrati**

Navaratri is an annual Hindu festival observed in the honour of the goddess Durga. It spans over nine nights, first in the month of Chaitra, and again in the month of Sharada. It is observed for different reasons and celebrated differently in various parts of the Hindu Indian cultural sphere.

**October 1: Native American Women's Equal Pay Day**

The aim is to raise awareness about the wider-than-average pay gap between Native American women and White men. Native American women are paid 57 cents for every dollar paid to white men.

**October 1: International Day of Older Persons**

On 14 December 1990, the United Nations General Assembly designated October 1 as the International Day of Older Persons (resolution 45/106). This was preceded by initiatives such as the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing, which was adopted by the 1982 World Assembly on Ageing and endorsed later that year by the UN General Assembly. In 1991, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Principles for Older Persons (resolution 46/91). In 2002, the Second World Assembly on Ageing adopted the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, to respond to the opportunities and challenges of population ageing in the 21st century and to promote the development of a society for all ages. In Canada October 1 of each year is National Seniors Day, which coincides with the United Nations International Day of Older Persons and is an occasion for Canadians to celebrate the profound contributions of seniors in our homes, communities and workplaces.

**October 2: Mehragan** (Iran, Zoroastrian)

The word "Mehr" in Persian means kindness, love and friendship. Mehragan is celebrated by Zoroastrian and Persian (Iranian) people and was based on the concept that all of the farmers would bring their harvest in the middle of the town square and spit it up evenly.

**October 2: International Day of Nonviolence** (India)

Mohandas Karamchand "Mahatma" Gandhi (1869 – 1948). Birthdate is October 2. He is one of the most respected spiritual and political leaders of the twentieth century. The Indian people called Gandhi "Mahatma", meaning Great Soul. Gandhi is the National Father of India, who adopted 'non-violence' in fighting for the country's freedom from British rule.

**October 4: St. Francis Day**

Feast day for St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and the environment, celebrated by many Catholic denominations

**October 3: Durga Puja** (Hindu)

This day celebrates the divine creative force of the universe and honours the 10-armed goddess Durga. Wife of Shiva and the destroyer of demons.

**October 4: Chung Yeung Festival** (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan)

Families visit the grave of their ancestors.

**October 4: Feast of St. Francis of Assisi** (Italy)

The patron saint of animals was born in 1182 at Assisi. He founded the Franciscan Order, which today has about 33,000 members.

**October 4: Blessing of the Animals**

In congruence with St. Francis Day. Many Unitarian Universalists have noticed animals knew the Catholic tradition of blessing animals, particularly pets, as St. Francis for his special connection.

**October 4 to 5: Yom Kippur** (Jewish)

The holiest day on the Jewish calendar, a day of atonement marked by fasting and ceremonial repentance. They believe that once you atone for your mistakes, you can be "at one" with God. Jews do not work, and they fast, from sunset to sunset.

**October 5: Dasara, Dussehra, or Vijaydashami** (Hindu)

In the eastern and northeastern states of India, marks the end of Durga Puja, remembering goddess Durga's victory over the buffalo demon Mahishasura to help restore dharma. Dussehra means 'the tenth' and celebrates the triumph of Lord Ram over the demon Ravan who stole his wife Sita. The great Hindu epic poem, the Ramayana, is read and enacted, called Ram Lila. A big effigy of Ravan is burnt accompanied by fireworks.

**October 8 – 9: Mawlid al-Nabi or Eid Milad Un Nabi**

The observance of the birthday of Islam founder, the prophet Muhammad, celebrated during the month of Rabiulawal, the third month of the Muslim calendar. Shi'a Muslims celebrate it five days later than Sunni Muslims. Celebrating the birth and life of Prophet Muhammad. It falls on the 12th or 17th day of the Islamic month of Rabi' al-awwal. Mawlid al-Nabi is a spiritual and social occasion for the Muslims who celebrate it. It is a memorial day when the Sirah (the life story of the Prophet) is revisited and

scholars and singers in the Sufi tradition remind the members of the Ummah about the teachings of the Prophet(s), as well as the successes and challenges of the young Muslim community in Mecca and Medina. During this celebration, homes and mosques are decorated, large parades take place, and those observing the holiday participate in charity events. During this celebration, homes and mosques are decorated, large parades take place, and those observing the holiday participate in charity events.

**October 9: Han-Gul Day** (Korea)

This day commemorates the creation of the Korean alphabet of 29 phonetic symbols called han-gul by King Sejong between 1443 and 1446.

**October 9: Pavarana** (Buddhist)

Buddha went into intensive practice during the rainy season. This marks the end of the retreat.

**October 9: Eid-Maulad-un-Nabi** (Islam)

Anniversary of the birth of Prophet Muhammad. Some Muslims mark this occasion by special prayers, whilst other Muslims may mark the occasion by dedicating more time to reading the Koran.

**October 9 to 16: Sukkot** (Jewish)

A seven-day Jewish festival giving thanks for the fall harvest. The Feast of Booths is a joyful harvest festival lasting 9 days. A little hut called 'sukkah' is built outdoors where families eat to remember the time Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years, sleeping and eating under the stars.

**October 10: Taiiku no hi** (Japan)

Also known as Health-Sports Day or Sports Day. A national holiday in Japan held annually on the second Monday in October.

**October 10: Thanksgiving** (Canada)

A chance for people to give thanks for a good harvest and other fortunes in the past year. Early Canadian settlers gave thanks for good harvests by decorating their churches with fruits and vegetables and celebrated dinner with venison and waterfowl.

**October 10: Indigenous Peoples' Day** (US)

Formerly called Columbus Day, honours the Indigenous people of North America. Beginning in 1992 on this day, drums across the USA and in different time zones coordinate ceremonies and observances at 12 pm to celebrate and honour 500 years of North American Indigenous people's resistance and survival.

**October 10: World Mental Health Day**

First celebrated in 1993, this day is meant to increase public awareness about the importance of mental health, mental health services, and mental health workers worldwide.

**October 10: Kathina** (Buddhist)

New robes and necessities are given to ordained monks and nuns.

**October 11: National Coming Out Day** (United States)

For those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer, this day celebrates coming out and the recognition of the 1987 march on Washington for gay and lesbian equality.

**October 11: National Indigenous Peoples Day**

An alternative celebration to Columbus Day, gives recognition to the indigenous populations affected by colonization.

**October 11: International Day of the Girl Child**

The main aims of the day are to promote girls' empowerment and fulfillment of their human rights, while also highlighting the challenges that girls all over the world face. The celebration of the day also 'reflects the successful emergence of girls and young women as a distinct cohort in development policy, programming, campaigning, and research.

**October 12: Nossa Senhora de Aparecida** (Brazil)

In 1717, a group of Brazilian fisherman pulled up a wooden statue of the Virgin Mary, which was followed by an abundant catch after a fruitless fishing day. They enshrined the statue and the Brazilian nation declared Nossa Senhora De Aparecida the Patroness of Brazil.

**October 12: Dia de la Hispanidad** (Spain)

Spanish National Day. This date remembers the arrival of Christopher Columbus in America, a day with complex controversial meanings. Hispanics in the U.S. are split on their political feelings about the holiday. In most Spanish-speaking countries, it is celebrated as Dia de la Raza (Mexico), Dia de las Culturas (Costa Rica), to celebrate the contributions of the country's indigenous, Spanish, African and Asian cultures. Latin Americans celebrate October 12 under many different names, including day of Respect for Cultural Diversity (Argentina), Decolonization Day (Bolivia), Day of Interculturality and Plurinationality (Ecuador), Day of Indigenous Peoples and Intercultural Dialogue (Peru) and Indigenous Resistance Day (Venezuela). October 12<sup>th</sup> is not recognized as a holiday in Cuba.

**October 12 – 16: Gahambar Ayathrem** (Zoroastrian)

This day celebrates the creation of plant life

**October 13: Karva Chauth** (Hindu)

A one-day fasts kept by married Hindu women for the well-being and longevity of their husbands. The husbands feed the first bite to their wives only after they see the moon.

**October 15: White Cane Safety Day**

A national observance in the United States, celebrated on October 15 of each year since 1964. The date is set aside to celebrate the achievements of people who are blind

or visually impaired and the important symbol of blindness and tool of independence, the white cane.

**October 15: International Day of Rural Women**

This new international day, first observed in 2008 was, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/136 of 12/18/07, recognizes “the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty”. It is purposely held the day before World Food Day in order to highlight the role played by rural women in food production and food security.

**October 16: World Food Day**

Since 1979, this worldwide event has sought to increase awareness, understanding and informed year-round action to alleviate hunger, malnutrition and poverty

**October 16 to 18: Shemini Atzeret**

A Jewish holiday also known as The Eighth (Day) of Assembly, takes place the day after the Sukkot festival, where gratitude for the fall harvest is deeply internalized. Special prayers for rain are offered.

**October 17: Multicultural Diversity Day (US)**

A national day created by Cleorah Scruggs, a fourth-grade teacher in Flint, Michigan, the day was adopted as a national event by the NEA’s 1993 Representative Assembly to ‘increase awareness of the tremendous need to celebrate our diversity collectively’.

**October 17: Black Poetry Day**

The day commemorates the birthday of Jupiter Hammon, the first published African-American poet. His first work, the religious poem “An Evening Thought,” was published in 1760 and is still reprinted today.

**October 17: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is held annually on 17 October to provide an opportunity to acknowledge the effort and struggle of people living in poverty; a chance for them to make their concerns heard; and a moment to recognize that poor people are the first ones to fight against poverty. Through resolution 47/196, adopted on 22 December 1992, the UN General Assembly declared 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and invited all States to devote the Day to presenting and promoting, as appropriate in the national context, concrete activities with regard to the eradication of poverty and destitution.

**October 17 to 18: Simchat Torah (Jewish)**

A Jewish holiday marks the end of the weekly readings of the Torah. The Torah is read from chapter one of Genesis to Deuteronomy 34 and then back to chapter one again, in acknowledgement of the words of the Torah being a never-ending cycle.

**October 18: Birthday of the Bab (Baha’i)**

Born Siyyid ‘Ali Muhammad in Southwestern Iran in 1819. His title, in Arabic, means The Gate. Work is suspended and Bahá’ís come together for prayer and festivities.

**October 19: Birth of Baha'u'llah**

Born Mirza Husayn 'Ali into one of the leading noble families of Persia in 1817. His name is a title, in Arabic, meaning "the Glory of God".

**October 20: Sikh Holy Day**

The day Sikhs celebrate Sri Guru Granth Sahib, their spiritual guide

**October 20: International Pronouns Day**

Seeks to make respecting, sharing, and educating about personal pronouns commonplace. Each year it is held on the third Wednesday of October.

**October 21: LGBTQ+ Spirit Day**

Started in 2010 by Canadian teenager Brittany McMillan, it was initially created in response to a rash of widely publicized bullying-related suicides of gay school students in 2010, including that of Tyler Clementi. Promoted by GLAAD, observers wear the color purple as a visible sign of support for LGBTQ youth and against bullying during National Bullying Prevention Month, as well as to honor LGBTQ victims of suicide. Wear purple on this day to support LGBTQ youth and speak out against bullying.

**October 22: Abu Simbel Festival (Egypt)**

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

**October 23: Chulalongkorn Day (Thailand)**

This day commemorated the birth of Rama V, a progressive ruler who lived in 1868 – 1910.

**October 24: Diwali (Sikh, Hindu)**

The Hindu, Jain, and Sikh five-day festival of lights that celebrates new beginnings and the triumph of good over evil and lightness over darkness. Diwali means 'row of lights' and is the Hindu New Year. It lasts for 5 days. Day 1 – New Year for business; Day 2 – the triumph of god Vishnu over the evil demon; Day 3 – Lakshmi, the goddess of prosperity visits homes lit by lamps; Day 4 – Bali worship day; Day 5 – devoted to brothers and sisters.

**October 24: Mahavira Nirvana (Jain)**

This day celebrates the attainment of Moksha by Lord Mahavira and is the 'Festival of Lamps'.

**October 24: United Nations Day**

UN Day marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter. With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being. There is no other global organization with the legitimacy, convening power and normative

impact of the United Nations. Today, the urgency for all countries to come together, to fulfil the promise of the nations united, has rarely been greater. 24 October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948. In 1971, the United Nations General Assembly recommended that Member States as a public holiday observe the day.

**October 29: National Organization for Women (NOW)**

Founded in 1966 to take action to bring about equality for all women. The foundation focuses on a broad range of women's rights issues, including economic justice, pay equity, racial discrimination, women's health and body image, women in disabilities, reproductive rights and justice, family law, marriage and family formation rights of same-sex couples, representation of women in the media and global feminist issues.

**October 29: Latina Equal Pay Day**

The aim is to raise awareness about the wider-than-average pay gap between Latinas and White men. Latinas are paid 54 cents for every dollar paid to White men.

**October 31: All Hallows' Eve (Halloween)**

A celebration observed in a number of countries on the eve of the Western Christian feast of All Hallows' Day. It begins the three-day observance of Allhallowtide, the time in the liturgical year dedicated to remembering the dead, including saints (hallows), martyrs, and all the faithful departed. This tradition goes back to the Celtic people 2,000 years who celebrated their New Year in late autumn and honoured Samhain or Lord of the Dead.

**October 31: Reformation Day**

A Protestant Christian religious holiday celebrated alongside All Hallows' Eve (Halloween) during the triduum of Allhallowtide in remembrance of the onset of the Reformation

**October 31 – November 1: Samhain**

A Gaelic festival marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter. Traditionally, animals were slaughtered for winter provisions and the spirits of those who have died in the last year are invited to a final celebration.