

Communication from the Division of Health Equity - Office of Ethnic Services

DATE: September 16, 2022

TO: All ACBH Employees

FROM: Stephanie Montgomery, Director
Health Equity Division



SUBJECT: ACBH HONORS HISPANIC & LATINO/LATINX HERITAGE MONTH 2022

The month beginning mid-September through mid-October is commonly referred to as Hispanic Latino/Latinx Heritage Month. We at Alameda County Behavioral Health pause to acknowledge and honor the history, spirit, tradition, and culture of this community. We are pleased to join the national recognition of Hispanic Latino/Latinx Heritage Month. The celebration has become an annual commemoration between September 15 and October 15, each year. While we are all beginning a return to normalcy, we are honored to continue to the work to uplift the Latino/Latinx community in the services we provide at ACBH. We recognize the triumphs and contributions as well as the struggles of this community.

We are especially proud this year as we are actively engaged in creating a Latino/Latinx Steering Committee to better help us to meet the mental health needs of the Latino/Latinx community in Alameda County. With nearly 23 percent of Alameda County residents identifying as Latino/Latinx, but far fewer seeking mental health support, we know the task at hand is daunting. Our team is actively engaged with the Latino/Latinx community in removing the stigma and barriers to access associated with mental health support. We look forward to a deeper and continued engagement in the community.

The Origins of This Month:

Hispanic Heritage Month began as Hispanic Heritage Week. Hispanic Heritage Week was established by legislation sponsored by Rep. [Edward R. Roybal](#) of Los Angeles and was signed into law by President [Lyndon Johnson](#) in 1968. In 1988, the commemorative week was expanded to a month (September 15 to October 15) by legislation sponsored by Rep. [Esteban Edward Torres](#) (D-Pico Rivera), amended by Senator [Paul Simon](#) and signed into law by President [Ronald Reagan](#). September 15 was chosen as the starting point for the commemoration because it is the anniversary of independence of five [Hispanic](#) countries: Costa Rica, [Honduras](#) and [Nicaragua](#), who all declared independence in 1821. In addition, [Mexico](#), [Chile](#) and [Belize](#) celebrate their independence days on September 16, September 18, and September 21 respectively.

Hispanic Heritage Week was first proclaimed by President [Lyndon B. Johnson](#) in 1968 in [Presidential proclamation](#) 3869. Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, and Reagan gave annual



proclamations for Hispanic Heritage Week between 1969 and 1988. National Hispanic Heritage Month was first proclaimed by [President George H. W. Bush](#) on September 14, 1989 in Presidential Proclamation 6021. Since 1989, all Presidents have given a Presidential Proclamation to mark Hispanic Heritage Month.

This month is also an opportunity for us all to educate ourselves about the history of the Hispanic and Latino/Latinx community. Below are a few books to help orient ourselves about the contributions of the Latino/Latinx community:

- How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents by Julia Alvarez
- The House of Spirits by Isabel Allende
- The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros
- The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo
- All the Odes by Pablo Neruda
- Love in The Time of Cholera by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
- I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter by Erika L. Sanchez
- Like Water for Chocolate by Laura Esquivel
- The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho
- Bless Me, Ultima by Rudolfo Anaya
- The Shadow of the Wind by Carlo Ruiz Zafon
- Don Quixote by Miguel de Cervantes Saaverda
- Waiting for Snow in Havana by Carlos M.N. Eire

In addition, below are links to both local and national activities in honor of Hispanic Latino\Latinx Heritage Month.

LOCAL:

Alameda County Library - [Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month | Alameda County Library \(aclibrary.org\)](#)

[Events | Alameda County Library | BiblioCommons](#)

Diocese of Oakland - [Hispanic Heritage Month - Diocese of Oakland CA - Oakland, CA \(oakdiocese.org\)](#)

Unity Council - [News – The Unity Council](#)

Peralta GEMS - [College of Alameda is celebrating Latinx/ Hispanic Heritage Month! \(Sept. 15 - Oct. 15\) \(peralta.edu\)](#)

510 Families - [Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month for Kids & Families - 510 Families](#)

STATE:

Los Angeles Magazine - [How to Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month in Los Angeles \(lomag.com\)](#)

NATIONAL:

Library of Congress - [National Hispanic American Heritage Month 2022 \(hispanicheritagemoth.gov\)](#)

The Hispanic Museum and Library - [Hispanic Heritage Month | Hispanic Society of America](#)

National Museum of American History - [Hispanic Heritage Month 2022 | National Museum of American History \(si.edu\)](#)

“The Latina in me is an ember that blazes forever.”
– Sonia Sotomayor

