It's November! This month's diversity holidays and awareness days include:

American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month:

November is American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month. The quest for national recognition began as a private effort in the early part of the 20th Century. The first “American Indian Day” was held in 1916 in New York. Since the late 1970s, not only were various pieces of legislation enacted but subsequent presidents have also issued annual proclamations announcing a day, week or month to celebrate American Indian and Alaska Native heritage. An official national day of recognition was not established until 2009 when the Friday immediately following Thanksgiving Day was announced as ‘Native American Heritage Day.”

November was chosen as the most appropriate month to recognize and celebrate American Indians and Alaska Natives because traditionally it is a time when many hold ceremonies, powwows, dances and various feasts welcoming fall.

For more information, please visit:

- [Alaska Native Heritage Month](#)
- [American Indian Maps of North, Central and South America](#)
- [First People-The Legends](#)
- [KUMC Diversity Calendar](#)
- [Law Library of Congress](#)
- [Native American Heritage Month](#)
- [National Museum of the American Indian](#)
- [National Park Service](#)
- [US Department of Interior Indian Affairs](#)
Veterans Day: Tuesday, 11

Veteran’s Day is a day to honor all veterans and their service to the United States. This day marks the anniversary of the signing of the armistice, which ended World War I. The armistice marked a truce agreement between the Allied Nations and Germany in 1918. November 11th is significant because the armistice was signed on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918.

For more information, please visit:
- Department of Veteran Affairs
- History.com
- History of Veterans Day
- Military.com
- WV Veterans Memorial

International Day for Tolerance: Sunday, 16

Following the United Nations Year for Tolerance, the UN General Assembly established the International Day for Tolerance in 1996. It is a day to help “advance human welfare, freedom and progress everywhere, as well as to encourage tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples, in order to promote international peace and security.”

For more information, please visit:
- Human Rights Education Associates
- United Nations
Transgender Day of Remembrance: Thursday, 20

Gwendolyn Ann Smith founded Transgender Day of Remembrance in 1998 to memorialize Rita Hester, a transgender African American, who was murdered in Allston, MA on November 28, 1998. This year marks the 15th anniversary to honor those who were killed because of transphobic hate and prejudice.

For more information, please visit:

- Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)
- Human Rights Campaign
- Remembering our Dead
- Remembering Rita Hester

Thanksgiving Day: Thursday, 27

Thanksgiving Day, as many of us know it, began as a celebration of the yearly harvest and has been celebrated by state legislation since the time of the U.S. Founding Fathers, but only by presidential proclamation since 1863. It was not until federal regulation in 1941 that Thanksgiving has been annually celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November. While it has roots in religious and cultural tradition, today Thanksgiving is primarily celebrated as a secular (worldly rather than spiritually or religious) holiday.

American Indians celebrated many days of thanks long before the pilgrims arrived in the new world. While the image of American Indians and pilgrims having thanksgiving together is widespread, please take a few minutes to read the American Indian articles for a different perspective.

For more information, please visit:

- The First Thanksgiving: An American Indian Perspective
- Manataka American Indian Council
- Native Circle: The Thanksgiving Myth
- National Day of Mourning
- Thanksgiving Day in the U.S.
Thanksgiving: A day of Celebration of Mourning for Native Americans?
United American Indians of New England
“Wampsutta” Frank James

**********

American Indian (Native American) Heritage Day: Friday, 28

The Native American Heritage Day Bill was established in 2008 and supported by The National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) and 184 federally recognized tribes. The bill designates the Friday after Thanksgiving as a day to honor American Indians for their contributions to the U.S. The NAHD Bill also encourages elementary and secondary schools to enhance student understanding by focusing on the history, achievements and contributions of American Indians.

For more information, please see the links under American Indian Heritage Month or visit:

- Appalachian American Indians of West Virginia
- American Indian Movement
- History of American Indians in WV
- Indians.org
- Smithsonian Education
- WV American Indian Communities

Grass dancers Sodizin Medicine Bull, left, and brother, Niyol, perform at the Montana State Centennial Mall.

For more information on diversity and inclusion or to submit diversity and inclusion ideas, articles, and events, please visit Extension’s Social Justice website or contact me at Tonya.Michael@mail.wvu.edu / 304-293-8948 / 406 Knapp Hall, Morgantown WV 26506.