

Cultural Competence & Ethnic Services Newsletter

Issue 11 | November 2021

Celebrate Native American Heritage Month

November is Native American Heritage Month! This month is set aside to celebrate the rich histories, diverse cultures and important contributions of our nation’s first people. Please see special feature section contributed by Sacramento Native American Health Center, Inc. continuing on next page



International Day of Tolerance

16 November 2021



Fostering Mutual Understanding among Cultures and Peoples

November 16th has been declared by the UN Educational Scientific & Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as the **International Day for Tolerance**. The day, observed since 1995 has increased public awareness of the dangers of intolerance. It is a time for acknowledging,

respecting and accepting the cultures, beliefs and traditions of others while understanding the risk of intolerance. (Continued on page 8)

In this issue:

- ✓ **Native American Heritage Month – Special Feature begins on page 2**
- ✓ **International Day of Tolerance– page 8**
- ✓ **Transgender Awareness Week– page 1**
- ✓ **Transgender Day of Remembrance – page 1**
- ✓ **National Recovery Day- page 9**
- ✓ **Fentanyl Awareness - page 10**
- ✓ **Diabetes Day – page 11**
- ✓ **Veteran’s Day – page 11**
- ✓ **Cultural Holiday Section – page 12**
 - **All Saints Day - Nov 1**
 - **All Souls Day - November 2 (Dia de los Muertos)**
 - **Dhanteras - November 2**
 - **Diwali - November 4**
 - **Nagar Kirtan festival November 5-7**
 - **Bhai Dooj - November 6**
 - **Chhath Puja- November 10**
 - **Guru Nanak Birthday - November 19**
 - **Kartik Purnima- November 19**
 - **Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib- November 24**
 - **Thanksgiving - November 25**
 - **Advent season begins - November 28**
 - **Hanukkah begins - November 29**

Transgender Awareness Week & Transgender Day of Remembrance

Each year between November 13 – 19, Transgender Awareness Week is celebrated to acknowledge transgender people and highlight issues members of the community face. (Please see articles beginning on page 6)

(Continued from page 1)

Celebrate Native American Heritage Month & Native American Heritage Day (November 26, 2021)



In October 2021, the President of the United States issued a proclamation to honor November as Native American Health Month and to celebrate November 26, 2021 as Native American Heritage Day:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/10/29/a-proclamation-on-national-native-american-heritage-month-2021/>



Public photo from US Department of Interior

Several government agencies have special sections with history and celebrations. Please see links below:

<https://www.doi.gov/blog/celebrate-native-american-heritage-month>

<https://www.ncai.org/initiatives/native-american-heritage-month>

<https://www.nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov/>

<https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/announcements/2021-announcements/native-american-heritage-month/>

Celebrate Native American Heritage Month with Sacramento Native American Health Center, Inc. SNAHC



For more information please contact:
(916) 341 0575 <https://www.snahc.org/>

Special thanks to SNAHC for the following special section:

For generations, Native communities have used Traditional cultural practices to teach, to prevent, and to heal. Today we know that research indicates that culture is significantly linked to positive mental health and has been used effectively to improve community outcomes.

(Barnett et al., 2020; Barraza et al., 2016; King et al., 2019; Matheson, Bombay, & Anisman, 2018; Masotti et al., 2020; Snowshoe et al., 2015).

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 2)

There are many communities that continue to utilize culture as a healing modality and implement Culture is Prevention, CIP. Although this may look different from Tribe, Nation, Band, or Community, the key elements continue to be the same.

They include gathering, providing the sense of belonging, sharing historical stories and speaking of historical trauma, sharing laughter and identifying resilience, and learning new skills and practices to share the gift of generosity

Sacramento Native American Health Center, SNAHC, is pleased to provide the Sacramento community with biweekly CIP. We have been honored to bring individuals that have shared lifelong teachings from generation to generation.

Making moccasins, medicine bags, drum making, and many other teachings we are learning ancestral knowledge, utilizing our senses to feel and smell the natural hide, experiencing the skills of beading and sewing, and being able to share your knowledge or share your gift with someone else.

This is done over a course of two sessions, and each participant comes away with the foundational teachings of Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) – sense of belonging; mastery and understanding of historical trauma; interdependence to share resources and gain from each other; and generosity, the gift of giving.

We know that “Culture is Prevention,” prevention from substances, prevention from violence, and prevention of suicide. More communities have been able to secure funding, overcome Covid restrictions, incorporate CIP to honor those that are stakeholders in our communities, and provide the space for healing. For more information, please feel free to reach out to SNAHC. <https://www.snahc.org/>

What does it mean to be a Native American today – Sarah Medicine Crow, Program Coordinator



Photo provided courtesy of the SNAHC

To be a Native American today means I am born to thrive. My identity makes me feel strong because I am a part of strong communities. My identity isn't stagnant, nor is it a statistic; rather an interwoven culmination of thousands and hundreds of thousands of years of people who continue to thrive off of the lands they call and remember as home.

In fact, we have many stories that tell of our beautiful lands and histories – stories that illustrate our complex societies as holders of vast amounts of knowledge. Stories are how we remember. We also remember the truth of “American HIStory” and the attempts to de-humanize, erase, and assimilate our minds, souls, bodies, and lands.

These memories are a part of me as well. To be very clear, my story is not part of a monolithic tale as traditional “American HIStory” tells it.

Instead, I see myself as self-determined and very much alive.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 3)

My name is Sarah Medicine Crow; I am Hidatsa and a member of the Three Affiliated Tribes of Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota. I am also Agai Dicutta (Walker River Paiute) from Schurz, Nevada. I am also Wašiw (Washoe) and lived on the Hung-a-lel-ti reservation up until the time I was 11 years old. I moved with my family to Sacramento and attended Jonas Salk Preparatory Middle School. Later, I attended and graduated from Grant Union High School. For college, I attended UC Berkeley and majored in Native American Studies. I currently work at the Sacramento Native American Health Center as a Program Coordinator in the Community Health Department. I prefer to be recognized by the nations and lands I come from because I feel empowered knowing that if it weren't for the thriving survivors in my family, I would not be here. Therefore, I believe I was born with a purpose, which is to continue to dream and be strong for my communities.

It is my dream to create, prioritize, and normalize physical intentional spaces where community healing and restoration occur. I desire to work in the health care field because it is where I most want to inspire change. Change making in this field is not easy because of the present systematic oppressive laws and policies that hinder Native/Indigenous people's abilities to live healthy lives.

I would like allies/accomplices to know that we are diverse, have intersectional identities, and want to be seen and accepted. I am proud to work with the Community Health Department at the Sacramento Native American Health Center because we value the culture of "belonging" and push to center the Native community. Overall, I want a better future for Indigenous generations – they/we deserve it.

Mary Tarango
Tribal Elder, Tribal Chair Emeritus
Wilton Rancheria

Mary Tarango is an American Indian woman,

tribal elder, and enrolled member of the Wilton Band of Miwok Indians. She is a wife, mother, grandmother, singer/dancer, and teacher of traditions. Mary has a long history of commitment and contribution to the Sacramento American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) community.

Mary is an activist and advocate who fought for native rights, equality, freedom, and restoration of federal recognition of Wilton Rancheria. Thanks to her commitment and dedication, Wilton Rancheria gained federal recognition in 2009. Mary has served on the board of directors of the Sacramento Native American Health Center (SNAHC) for 10 years as a Chairwoman. She is an emeritus Tribal Chair of Wilton Rancheria and has tremendous pride of serving tribal community.

For Mary, Native American Heritage Month is a time for recognition and celebration. Mary describes "it is a time to recognize the contributions and sacrifices of Native American leaders; a time of learning and sharing culture, dances, songs, foods: it is a time to remember who you are, where you come from and to know that you have purpose."

Mary is the proud daughter of activist, Alvin Daniels Sr., who was one of the original founders of California Indian Affirmative Action that fought for Native American rights/equality in employment and fought for the advancement of Indian rights through affirmative action. Mary describes her father as "a proud Indian man" that when he spoke, "people would stop to listen." A man who organized with leaders to "make things happen and move things forward."

Mary describes that her father taught her the importance of making a difference and serving her tribal community.

Mary is inspired by the resilience of her tribal community and the laughter that brings content (Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 4)

to her heart. Mary wants AI/AN youth to know that they are the first people, the people of traditions, the dreamers, and to be proud of who they are and know that they have purpose.

Mary is a great elder, leader, advocate and someone that continues to bless tribal community.

River Burkhart, Native Youth Ambassador and Youth Communications Team member

River Burkhart is a Native Youth Ambassador and Youth Communications Team member at Sacramento Native American Health Center, SkillsUSA competition participant, Two-Spirit Native Youth Panelist; and is affiliated with Dakota, Cherokee, Choctaw tribes. River attributes their resilience and success from being (bi) queer in the Native community.

Becoming comfortable with themselves and their Native identity helped create that. As well as, learning to look in on an outsider's perspective and seeing what they struggle with. They have stepped out of their own shoes and seen what others are going through.

Their mom is the first mentor they see as successful, stating, "she's a great leader. She taught me pretty much everything I know about being a Native Leader." As well as, pretty much everyone at SNAHC, Alea, Mike, Jeanine and River's friends too.

River identifies success as a youth as helping to change your community, providing the change we need, especially for Native Youth. Trying to be the best you can be and working on yourself, while helping others.

River feels really happy that November is Native American Heritage Month. River states, "The only holiday where people would think about Indigenous people is Columbus day which isn't really a holiday for us. We can show people that we are here.

We can finally feel safe to openly celebrate our culture and heritage." To celebrate Native American Heritage Month, their sister, who works with SNAHC, made a digital art piece. River has made time to repost ways people can support the community and become knowledgeable.

One really big goal, River has is seeing the introduction of and having Native history in schools. With things being written correctly. They learn about Mayan culture, maybe, one day out of the year. River said, "I am mixed and it created a lot of confusion. A lot of people didn't know I was Native because I don't look Native. I faced a lot of Racism and our history in schools is lacking." I have grown up around a lot of people and gotten a lot of knowledge about substance abuse and how we have the highest rate of suicide. Using that information, I was able to guide where I am. River wants to go to UC Davis to study Conservation Biology and become a part of The Nest Organization to continue to remain connected to Native culture during their studies.

Thank you to Julie Fuentes (Pomo, Hopland Band) for sharing some Native specific resources for those interested in learning more:

Learn whose land you are standing on – SNAHC Land Acknowledgement
<https://tinyurl.com/bws9s3mt>

Decolonizing Thanksgiving: a Toolkit for combatting Racism in Schools (Great resources for families outside of schools as well) <https://tinyurl.com/265888zk>

Native American Authors you Need to Read Right Now <https://tinyurl.com/y8deez9a>

Support Native Artists by Buying Native this Holiday Season <https://tinyurl.com/hc963hxx>

Native American Children's Books List
<https://tinyurl.com/ykeax8h8>

Transgender Awareness Week

(Continued from page 1)



**TRANSGENDER
AWARENESS WEEK**

Transgender Week of Awareness (TWOA) is a one-week celebration that uplifts transgender voices, history, knowledge, and cultural artifact. TWOA brings to light the importance of protecting transgender people in our local communities and beyond.

It leads up to Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR), which memorializes victims of transphobic violence.

Transgender Day of Remembrance

(Continued from page 1)

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR), held on November 20th every year, memorializes victims of transphobic violence, and serves to remind us that transphobia continues to end lives throughout the world.



photo courtesy of Gender Health Center 1

As of the end of October 2021 in the United States alone, at least 44 trans people have been lost to violence. Of the 44 transgender people murdered this year, roughly two thirds were Black transgender women, who continue to be the most impacted by transphobic violence. TDOR is a day of mourning, often observed with a candlelit vigil.

It is a somber event that helps us process the immense grief that systemic, state, interpersonal and internalized violence brings us. We urge allies of transgender people to do their research, speak up, and educate others. We urge allies to defend and support the trans people in their lives and communities. Donate directly to trans people in need, and to organizations like Gender Health Center that provide invaluable resources to the trans and gender non-conforming community. Actions like these make a difference in a culture that so often seeks to erase us. Make sure to check our website for this year's TDOR Vigil event details.

Both articles above TWOA and TDOR were submitted by:

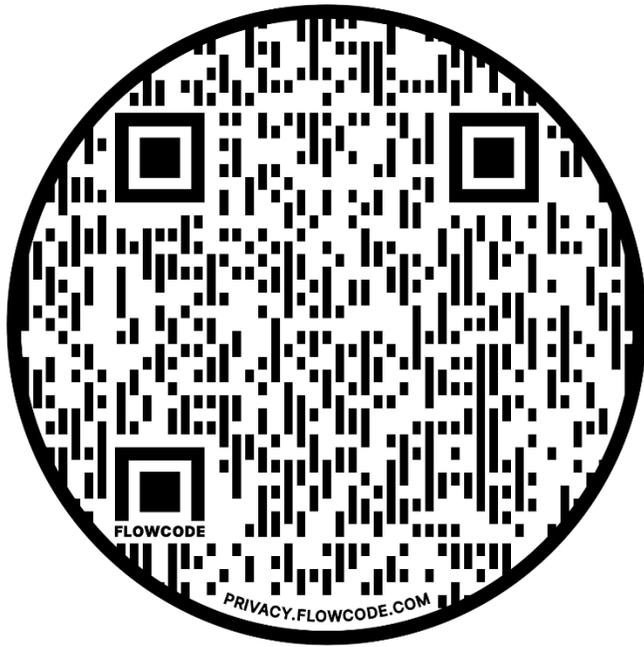
Harvey Marquez, Gender Health Center.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 6)

For more information on TOWA and TDOR, please visit the Gender Health Center.

Please click on image below to go to the Gender Health Center Website for local TOWA and TDOR events.



Gender Health Center Website:
<https://www.genderhealthcenter.org>

Sources: [Here Are the 43 Trans Americans Killed in 2021 So Far \(advocate.com\)](#)

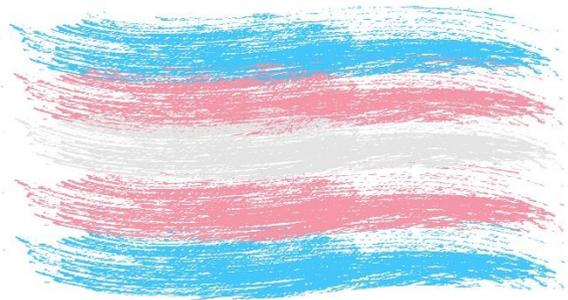
[HRC Remembers Rikkey Outumuro, a.k.a. Tru Starlet, Beloved Advocate and Drag Performer - HRC](#)

History of Transgender Day of Remembrance

Rita Hester, a transgender African American woman was brutally murdered in Allston, Massachusetts on November 28, 1998. Her

death inspired a movement and was the catalyst for the now annual Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR). Transgender Advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith, founded TDOR in 1999 and hosts an annual memorial each year.

Typically, a TDOR memorial includes a reading of the names of those who lost their lives from November 20 of the former year to November 20 of the current year, and highlights the importance of bringing awareness to violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Other TDOR memorial events may include church services, candlelight vigils, marches and rallies, art shows, food drives and film screenings.



**TRANSGENDER
DAY OF REMEMBRANCE
NOVEMBER, 20**

[GLAAD](#) (formerly the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) has extensively covered TDOR. This year for Transgender Awareness Week, GLAAD is encouraging everyone to watch the documentary DISCLOSURE on Netflix. The documentary explores the history of Transgender representation and depictions in

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from Page 7)

film and television from the earliest days of cinema to the present.

Through personal interviews with more than 30 transgender thought leaders and creatives -- DISCLOSURE invites viewers to see the dynamic interplay between negative representation on screen through stereotypes, tropes and memes, the resulting cultural attitudes off-screen, and the real-world consequences that these depictions have on trans people's lives. The stories are told from trans people's own experiences and perspectives and *"provides a direct conversation between transgender people and Hollywood by showcasing both sides of the conversation with direct examples in film history."*

All opinions, statements, testimonials and content expressed in the Netflix documentary DISCLOSURE belong to the content creators and are applicable to the individuals depicted and are not associated with Sacramento County, its Executive Staff, Management, affiliates, or employees.

Story submitted by:

Debrah DeLoney-Deans, LMFT/Program Planner, Sac County, DBHS

Excerpted from GLAAD website:

www.glaad.org and other Internet sources.

International Day of Tolerance

(Continued from page 1)

www.un.org/en/observances/tolerance-day

In 1996, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 51/95 and proclaimed November 16th as International Day for Tolerance. According to UNESCO, "Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human."



Sacramento has been described as one of the most diverse cities in the United States. I grew up in and currently reside in a community where the majority of my neighbors were born outside the United States.

We may not understand the customs, religious practices or traditions of others, but to live peacefully in the world, we are all charged with the responsibility to *"recognize the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. Tolerance is neither indulgence nor indifference, rather it is having respect and appreciation of the rich variety of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human."*

People are naturally diverse; in thought, ways of expression and in the ways we see, experience and understand the world around us. Tolerance is the only way we can ensure the survival of mixed communities in every region of the globe.

By cultivating a spirit of tolerance we can bring healing to our lives and the lives of others. Consider these tips to build and increase tolerance in your life: Practice patience, look within, check your ego, maintain perspective and remember change is a natural part of life.

Story submitted by:

Debrah DeLoney-Deans, LMFT/Program Planner, Sac County, DBHS

Excerpted from UNESCO website

<https://en.unesco.org>

**NATIONAL
RECOVERY
DAY:**

**CARLOS FINDS
HIS TRUE
PATH**



Sept. 30 was National Recovery Day, a time to celebrate the millions of people with drug and alcohol addiction who have achieved sobriety and live happy, productive lives... people like Sacramento resident Carlos Simpson.

Carlos Simpson has struggled with drug addiction since he was born. His first 14 days of life were spent in a hospital detoxing from heroin. Throughout his childhood, he witnessed his parents' involvement in prostitution, drug abuse, domestic violence and the revolving door of the penitentiary system.

With help from his great-grandmother, Simpson was able to attend good schools, eventually receiving a full-ride football scholarship to Sonoma State. But his past caught up with him. He began using and selling methamphetamine and ended up in prison. After his release, he made failed attempts to attend other colleges. Soon he had a family to support. He relapsed and ended up back in prison.

His turning point came behind bars. During a jail visit, he saw the disappointment in his son's eyes. "At that point, I knew I had hit rock bottom, and enough was enough," Simpson recalls. "I had to make a change." Simpson was facing 8-10 years of prison time when he was given the opportunity to participate in Re-Entry Court, Sacramento County's multi-department effort to help prisoners at risk of re-offending. It was there that he was offered residential treatment from the Substance Use Prevention and

Treatment Services program of Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services.

Today, Simpson is a transformed man. He works as a Life Coach in the Anti-Recidivism Coalition. He is a proud father and grandfather, serving as a football and baseball coach and volunteering throughout in his community in south Sacramento. As a teacher, counselor and mentor, Carlos says his life now is about giving back.

"My experiences, treatment and studies led me to believe that substance abuse is not only a disease but a mental health disorder at its highest level," he says. "I want to provide people hope for the future... Something I did not have when growing up."



Do you or a loved one need help with substance abuse?

System of Care for Substance Use Treatment



Call: (916) 874-9754

We have an epidemic in our community, it is called fentanyl.

Did you know that more people die from fentanyl than gun violence in our town?

Join us on November 6 to learn more about fentanyl and how using NARCAN can save a life.

Sacramento County District Attorney's Office in partnership with Sacramento County Department of Health Services, Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Services.

FENTANYL AWARENESS SAFETY FAIR

1 PILL CAN KILL

97% of tested street pills are fake, 97% of those pills contained fentanyl.

FREE EVENT!

MORE PEOPLE IN SACRAMENTO ARE DYING FROM FENTANYL POISONING THAN HOMICIDE!

NARCAN demonstration and kit giveaway. LEARN HOW TO SAVE A LIFE!

Connect with community resources.

Date and Time: **Saturday November 6 11:00am - 2:00pm** Location: **State Capitol North Lawn**

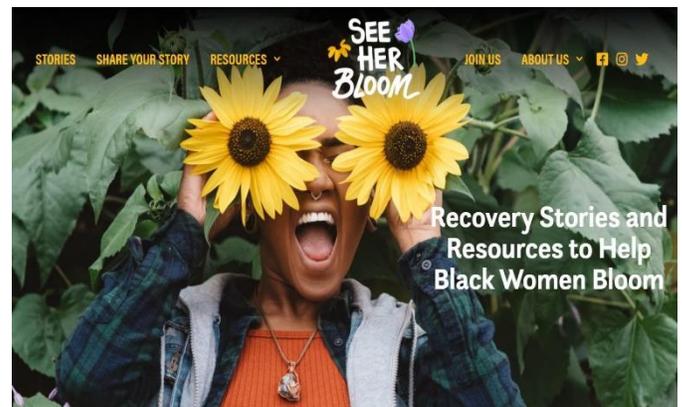
Enjoy local food. **Food Trucks** Free prizes. **Gift Card Giveaway!**

  1PillCanKillSac.com/Events



Helping Black Women with Opioid Use Disorder

<https://seeherbloom.org/>



Prevent Misuse of Prescription Medications

Help prevent the accidental or intentional misuse of unwanted medications. Properly dispose of expired, unwanted, or unused medications. Drug take back programs are the preferred method.



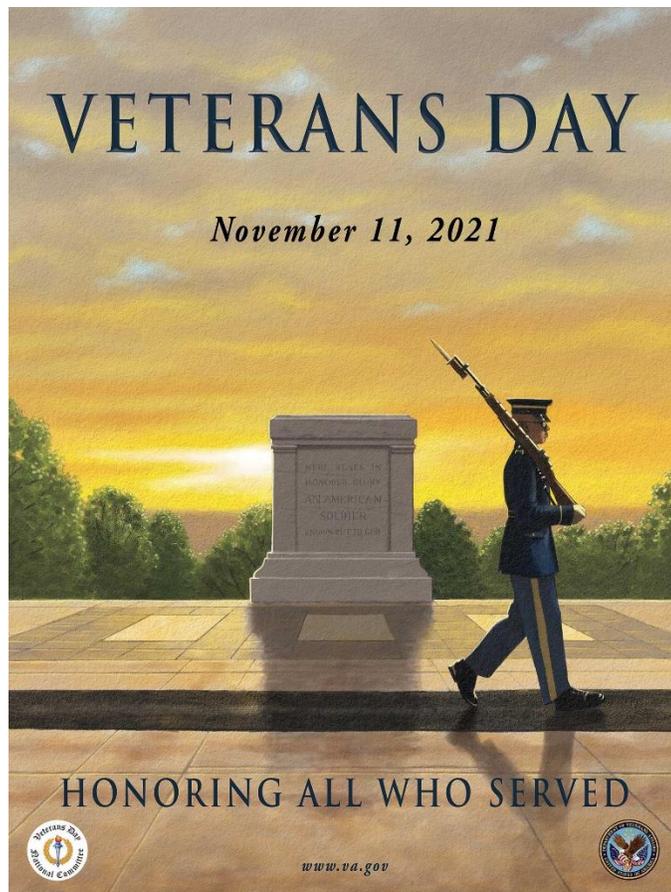
To find a drop-off site near you: [Safe Medication Disposal Sites](#)

Veteran's Day

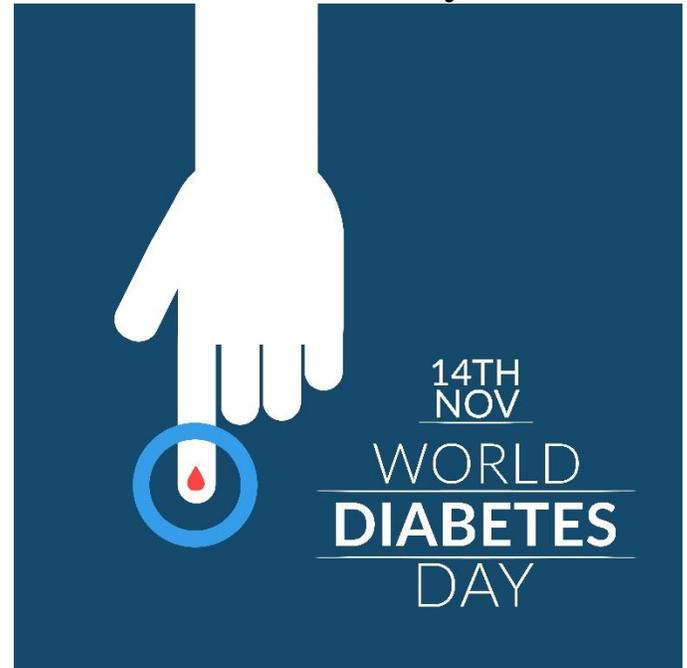
www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/vetdayhistory.asp

National Veterans Day Ceremony

The Veterans Day National Ceremony is held each year on November 11th at Arlington National Cemetery. The ceremony commences precisely at 11:00 a.m. with a wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns and continues inside the Memorial Amphitheater with a parade of colors by veterans' organizations and remarks from dignitaries. The ceremony is intended to honor and thank all who served in the United States Armed Forces.



World Diabetes Day



ACCESS TO DIABETES CARE: IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

Access to Diabetes Care is the theme for World Diabetes Day 2021-23. Access campaign materials and find out how you can get involved. <https://worlddiabetesday.org/>

Risk Factors for Diabetes and Pre-Diabetes

- Age 45 or older
- Black, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Asian American or Pacific Islander
- Have a parent, or sibling with diabetes
- Are overweight
- Are physically inactive
- Have high blood pressure or take medicine for high blood pressure
- Have low HDL cholesterol and/or high triglycerides
- Had diabetes during pregnancy
- Have been diagnosed with polycystic ovary syndrome

Protective Factors to reduce risk

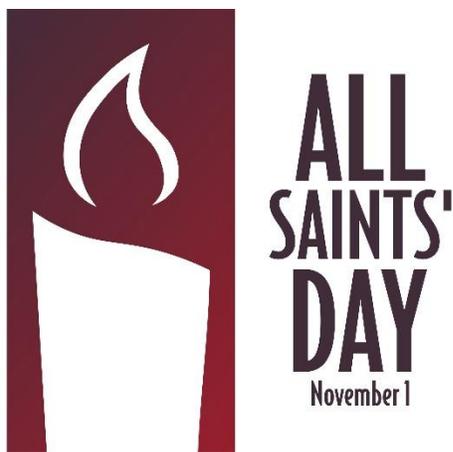
- Healthy Eating
- Exercise
- Stress reduction

Source: The American Diabetes Association (ADA). For more information check out the ADA website at <https://diabetes.org/diabetes-risk>

Holidays Celebrated in November

We honor all faiths and cultures in Sacramento County. Please help us to be inclusive by sharing your faith and cultural celebrations

- All Saints Day Nov 1 & All Souls Day



www.catholic.com/search?q=All%20Saints%20Day

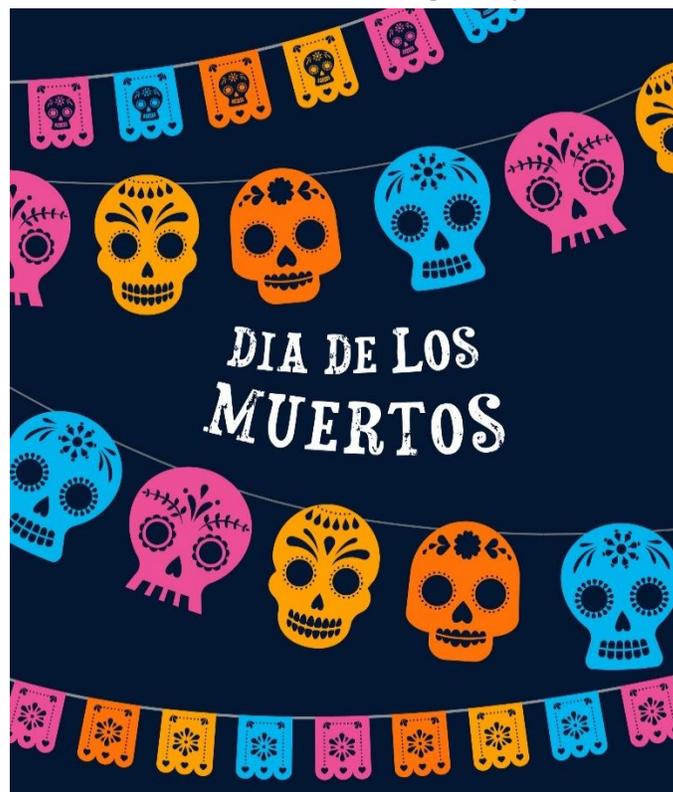
Dia de los Muertos, Mexico – November 2

The Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is celebrated just a little different among cultures from the same ethnic/national groups, yet below are the common practices and I will be sharing one point of view.

In Mexico the annual holiday of Dia de los Muertos is celebrated to honor the lives of ancestors and to acknowledge the ever-revolving cycle of the life and death. This is celebrated in between October 31st and November 2nd.

Mexicans remember and honor their deceased loved ones beginning October 31st, under the light of the moon during the evening hours, where the air is soon filled with drifting fragrances of copal and cempasuchil (Spanish name given to Mexican marigold flowers).

Dia de los Muertos is not a gloomy or morbid



occasion, rather it is a festive and colorful holiday celebrating the lives of who have passed on.

Mexicans visits cemeteries to decorate the graves with ofrendas (Spanish “offering”) with sugar skull, food and drink once enjoyed by the departed, personal mementos, and bright marigolds considered the flowers of the dead. It

is common to tell the stories of their departed loved one and spend time there, in the presence of their deceased friends and family members.

Submitted by:

**Theresa Riviera,
Cultural Competence Committee**

Dhanteras – November 2



Dhanteras is the first day of the five day long Diwali festival. The first day, Dhanteras, is for celebrating Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of wealth and prosperity. People buy new items such as jewelry, clothing and utensils and light oil lamps. Please see next article on Diwali.

<https://www.drikpanchang.com/festivals/dhanteras/festivals-dhanteras-puja-timings.html?geoname-id=5389489>

Diwali – November 4



Observed for five days, the festival of lights, Diwali or Deepavali brings prayers, feasts, fireworks, family gatherings, charitable giving and, for some, a new year. In 2021, Diwali was celebrated on Thursday, November 4th signifying the triumph of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil.

Diwali is known as the festival of lights because of the practice of lighting small oil lamps made of clay called “diyas.” Widely observed among more than a billion people of different faiths including Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Newar Buddhists across India and its diaspora, the festival is a time of reflection and gathering of family and friends to offer thanks and prayers.

While Diwali is rooted in religious traditions, the festival has become a secular holiday in India, Fiji, Guyana, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The Diwali festival takes place over five days. In the lead-up to Diwali, people prepare by cleaning, renovating, and decorating their homes and workplaces with diyas and rangolis,

(Continued on next page)

(Diwali continued from page 13)

circular patterns filled with colorful powder and flowers.

During Diwali, people wear their finest clothes, decorate the interior and exterior of their homes with diyas and rangoli, worship and offer prayers, light fireworks, and partake in family feasts, where mithai (sweets) and gifts are shared.



Mithai or sweets distributed at Diwali -



Diyas lit in colorful patterns

The first day, Dhanteras, is for celebrating Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of wealth and prosperity. People buy new items such as jewelry, clothing and utensils and light oil lamps.

The second day, known as Chhoti Diwali or Naraka Chaturdasi, people put up twinkling lights to celebrate the victory of good over evil.

The third day, known as Diwali or Lakshmi Puja, is the most important day of the Diwali festival. On this day, people visit family and friends to feast and exchange sweets and gifts. People also continue to light lamps and candles to welcome light and prosperity from the goddess Lakshmi.

On the fourth day, Govardhan Puja or Padva is celebrated. The fifth day, known as Bhai Dooj, is a day for brothers and sisters to honor one another. Siblings perform a ceremony called tilak and pray for one another.

During Diwali, towns and villages in India host melas or fairs, where food and entertainment are provided and local craftspeople and traders exchange goods. The women adorn themselves in colorful attire and decorate their hands with henna. In the U.S. and around the world, Diwali celebrations are held on university campuses or as community events by members of the Indian diaspora. At these events, the celebrations are marked by music, dance and art performances, food, crafts and cultural celebrations are featured.



Garba dancers performing at a Diwali celebration – photo courtesy of Dr. Malroutu

Story submitted by:
Lakshmi Malroutu, Ph.D.
Chief Operations Officer
Asian Pacific Community Counseling

Nagar Kirtan festival

The annual Nagar Kirtan Sikh festival was held the weekend of November 5 -7. In Yuba City.



Photo of festival attendees courtesy of Sadia Rajput, SCLC

Established in 1949, the [42nd Annual Nagar Kirtan festival](#) of Yuba City commemorates the Guruship of the Sikh's 11th Guru, Guru Granth Sahib Ji (Sikh's Holy Scripture).



Photo of parade courtesy of Sadia Rajput, SCLC

Cultural Competence Committee member Ms. Sadia Rajput attended this year and shares her photos and experience:

“Though I don’t directly follow the Sikh tradition. I do attended this very revered Sikh Festival called Nagar Kirtan festival that takes place every year in Yuba City by tens of thousands of people from all across the globe.

It is one of the biggest Sikh festival outside of India. Nigar Kirtan translates as “neighborhood singing”. This is one of my favorite holiday/ festival as the emphasis and message of this festival is unity, brotherhood, community, and embracing our diversity by coming together for great food and good times.



Photo of the langar (kitchen) providing free food courtesy of Sadia Rajput, SCLC

Food is provided free of charge, stalls of food and drinks stretch for more than a mile or two, shared with anyone/everyone attending the festival, encouraging the walkers passing to grab the plate and break the bread together with their neighbors.



Photo of helicopter dropping rose petals courtesy of Sadia Rajput, SCLC

(Continued on next page)

(Nagar Kirtan Sikh festival continued from page 15)

I love the festival for its colorful parade, the music, helicopter dropping the rose petals, fireworks and delicious food that takes me back to my own roots in subcontinent at my grandparents' home.

Every year with great anticipation I look forward to enjoying the freshly squeezed sugarcane juice that's rare to find anywhere else in U.S."

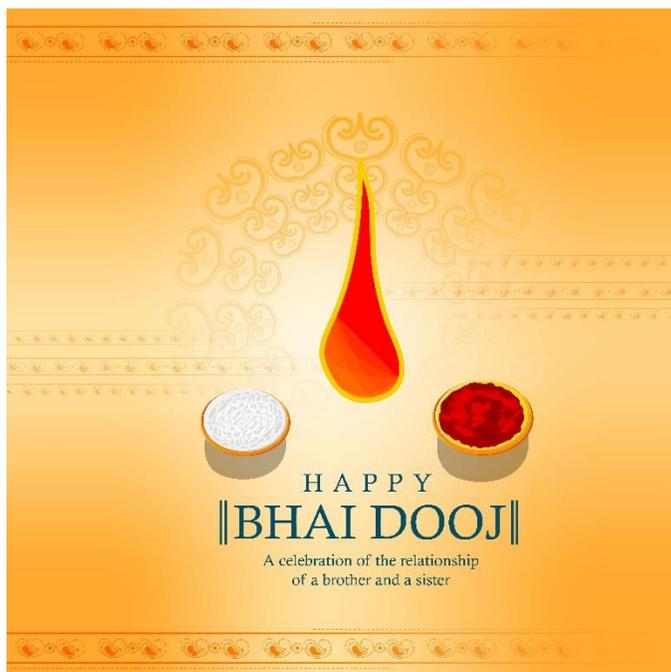
Submitted by:

Sadia-Himalaya Rajput

Executive Director

Sacramento Cultural & Linguistic Center

Bhai Dooj – November 6



Bhai Dooj is celebrated on the fifth day of Diwali to celebrate the relationship between a brother and a sister.

<https://www.winni.in/celebrate-relations/did-you-know-the-legends-associated-with-bhai-dooj/>

Chhath Puja- November 10

Holy day celebrated in parts of India and among immigrant communities in Sacramento



<https://www.astroshop.com/chhath-puja-2021-celebrate-in-this-way-to-please-chhath-mata/>

<https://www.bhaktibharat.com/en/festival/chhath-puja>

Guru Nanak Birthday – November 19



The first guru of the Sikh faith
<http://elsiegurdwara.org/>

Kartik Purnima- November 19

Kartik Purnima is an important religious day for Jains in Sacramento



<http://www.jcgsac.org/>
<https://www.mypandit.com/festivals/purnima/kartik-purnima/>

**Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib
November 24**



<https://www.sikhpeople.com/sikh-community/guru-teg-bahadur-martyrdom-day-do-you-know-why-the-sikh-guru-was-called-hind-di-chadar/>

Guru of the Sikh community



My mind is a reservoir full of vivid, delightful memories of Thanksgiving Day when I was kid.

(continued on next page)

(Thanksgiving continued from page 17)

While growing up, my Thanksgiving Thursday always began with attending 11:00 am church service, followed by a much anticipated holiday feast at my maternal grandmother's house where all of my aunts, uncles, and cousins gathered to give thanks for good health, family, and life in general.

For me, Thanksgiving was better than Christmas, because my grandma Carrie would spend two days prior preparing sweet treats like sweet potato pie, peach cobbler, and lemon pound cake from scratch, teacakes, pecan pie, and homemade ice cream. Not to mention masses of turkey, ham, cornbread dressing, greens (a combination of mustard and collards mixed together), yams, macaroni and cheese, cabbage, potato salad, black eyed peas, and yeast rolls.

My grandma Carrie passed away in 2012 at age 91, but she left behind boxes full of wonderful recipes passed down from generation to generation, family traditions and sweet memories that bring comfort and joy to my soul.

Whatever your holiday traditions, large or small, celebrated at home or abroad, with family or friends or both, the key is remembering to be grateful and thankful for the things we call blessings—family, friends, health, and home—while we renew our faith in mankind and fortify our commitment to help those who are less fortunate.

Story submitted by:
Debrah DeLoney-Deans, LMFT
Program Planner, Sac County, DBHS, CC
Unit

Advent season begins November 28



Advent is the season of preparation for the celebration of Christmas. There are three purple candles and one rose candle. One purple candle is lit each evening of the first week, a second on the second week. On the third week the Rose candle is lit signifying hope. The fourth week all four candles are lit. The candles are a reminder to prepare for the Christmas season
<https://www.catholic.com/encyclopedia/advent>

Hanukkah begins November 29



Hanukkah

Hanukkah, also known as Chanukah, (meaning “dedication” in Hebrew) is an annual Jewish holiday. The festive eight-day celebration beginning in the evening of Sunday - November 28th and ends in the evening of Monday - December 6. Lighting candles each night at sundown each night, singing special songs, reciting prayer, eating foods fried in oil.

(Continued on next page)

(Hanukkah continued from page 18)

- First Night: Learn the Story of Hanukkah
- Second Night: Decorating the home
- Third Night: making and cooking Latkes (Potato Pancakes), cook and eat
- Fourth Night: Dance Party, before opening gifts
- Fifth Night: making and baking Cookie and decorate in Hanukkah shapes
- Sixth Night: playing Dreidel Game
- Seventh Night: making bite size Sufganiyot (Jelly Donuts)
- Eighth Night: Tzedakah (Charitable Giving) – After seven nights of gifts and fun, at closing of Hanukkah we send time as family talking about how we have given to others.

Hanukkah is also called the Festival of Lights, the holiday brings joy and warmth to homes and communities with candies, food, family, and friends. Light comes literally, with the lighting of an additional candle each day and metaphorically, through a new emphasis on charitable donations.

Submitted by:

Theresa Riviera,

Cultural Competence Committee

Acknowledgements

The Cultural Competence Unit is grateful to our contributors for sharing their experiences and perspectives. We are learning so much from you all.

- **Harvey Marquez,** Gender Health Center
- **Theresa Riviera,** Cultural Competence Committee

- **Lakshmi Malrouu, Ph.D.**
Chief Operations Officer
Asian Pacific Community Counseling
- **Sadia Rajput,**
Executive Director
Sacramento Cultural & Linguistic Center (SCLC)
- **Stephanie Dasalla,**
Human Services Program Planner
Substance Use Prevention and Treatment (SUPT)

Special Thanks to



Native American Heritage Month Special Section was submitted by the following contributors courtesy of SNAHC:

- **Sarah Medicine Crow**
Program Coordinator
- **Mary Tarango**
Tribal Elder, Tribal Chair Emeritus
Wilton Rancheria
- **River Burkhardt,**
Native Youth Ambassador and Youth Communications Team member
- **Julie Fuentes**
Care Coordinator Supervisor



Helpful links:

Mental Health Access Service Request Form:

Sacramento County Mental Health Access Team would like to announce a new option for submitting a mental health service request. In addition to submitting service requests via phone, fax, and US postal service, you will now have the option to submit a service request Online. The online submission allows for anyone in the community to submit a service request. The submitting party will need to provide their contact info in the event the Access team needs to reach them. The online service request allows for any important details regarding the referral to be provided on the document. One of the most useful features to the community is the ability to receive an email when the Access team has received your service request. Routine processing for all service request submission types is 3-5 business days. Sacramento County Behavioral Health is excited about the new online option and we hope that it helps to remove barriers in submitting and following up on service requests. You can access the new form at this link:

<https://mhsr.saccounty.net/>

Please remember that if there is an immediate need for mental health services, the Access team can be contacted by phone at 916-875-1055.

Substance Use Prevention and Treatment:

To learn about our services please click on this link:

<https://dhs.saccounty.net/BHS/Pages/SUPT/Substance-Use-Prevention-and-Treatment.aspx>

To request treatment services, please call: (916) 874-9754 Toll Free: (888) 881-4881

COVID-19 Resources:

[Behavioral Health COVID-19 \(2019 Novel Coronavirus\) General Resources](#)

[Behavioral Health COVID-19 \(2019 Novel Coronavirus\) Provider Resources](#)

Job Seeker Resources

<https://personnel.saccounty.net/Pages/ESJobSeekerResources.aspx>

Please submit your ideas for future newsletters

Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services Cultural Competence & Ethnic Services Unit will continue to produce newsletters like this one. Please help us to celebrate the rich diversity of cultures in the County of Sacramento community by sharing your original content and photos along with your contact information to:

DHS Cultural Competence Unit

DHSCCUnit@saccounty.net

Please put “**newsletter**” in the subject line. Please note that we cannot use content without citing the source and cannot use photos without permission.