



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON DC 20420

DEC 22 2011

**MEMORANDUM FOR UNDER SECRETARIES, ASSISTANT SECRETARIES,
OTHER KEY OFFICIALS, AND FIELD FACILITY DIRECTORS**

SUBJECT: Special Emphasis Program Observances for 2012

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) observes special days, weeks, and months as reflected in the attached VA schedule of special program observances for 2012. Observances are held annually in compliance with Executive Order 11478, 29 CFR Part 1614.102(b)(4), joint Congressional Resolutions, Presidential Proclamations, and VA's Diversity and Inclusion goals as articulated in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion's Strategic Plan.

I ask that you engage managers and supervisors in planning and implementing initiatives that promote employment, increase training, and offer career advancement in order to sustain a productive, diverse, and inclusive VA workforce to best serve our Nation's Veterans. Showing our support as senior leaders and making a concerted effort to attend and participate in these observances is crucial in communicating the value each employee brings to the Department.

Information about special observances is provided on the attachment and may also be found on the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) Web site at <http://www.diversity.va.gov/calendar/default.aspx>. ODI national program managers are available to address questions and may be reached by calling (202) 461-4131.

Thank you for your continued commitment in support of these Special Program Observances.


John U. Sepúlveda

Attachments

**Department of Veterans Affairs
Special Observances for 2012**

Month/Date of Observance	Special Observance
January 16, 2012	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 2012	Black History Month
March 2012	Women's History Month
May 2012	Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
June 2012	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month
August 26, 2012	Women's Equality Day
September 15 – October 15, 2012	Hispanic Heritage Month
September 2012	Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week
October 2012	Disability Employment Awareness Month
November 2012	Native American Heritage Month

Department of Veterans Affairs

**SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
FOR
SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM OBSERVANCES**

Suggested activities include, but are not restricted to the following:

- Announcement by the field facility director requesting participation and support of all managers, supervisors, and employees for the special program observance/event.
- EEO presentations, workshops, and seminars for managers, supervisors and employees on Affirmative Employment and Diversity Programs.
- Seek ways to provide training and career development opportunities for your employees of all ethnic backgrounds.
- Lectures by guest speakers such as community leaders, representatives from local government, and academia on diversity.
- Share "best practices" from field facilities, who promote diversity in the workplace.
- Perform community outreach events targeting venues, such as Blacks in Government (BIG), Federally Employed Women (FEW), League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC), and Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) to encourage qualified individuals to apply for positions at VA for a diverse applicant pool. Additional diversity outreach venues and organizations can be found at:
<http://www.diversity.va.gov/org/default.aspx>.
- Special programs and award ceremonies to honor outstanding employees, who have contributed to diversity and resolved conflicts in the workplace.
- Develop a mentoring program for managers, supervisors, and employees.
- Create awareness by developing and newsletters, handouts, and sharing literature in your facility or office.

Office of Human Resources and Administration
Office of Diversity and Inclusion
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