

Cultural Heritage Months

The NCAA® aims to celebrate the rich and diverse histories, cultures and contributions of various communities year-round. There are many opportunities to learn about, reflect on and highlight the unique traditions that shape our membership.

WAYS TO CELEBRATE

Educate yourself.

Explore the culture through art, literature and film. Read literature and books specific to racially marginalized groups to grow your knowledge. You can find additional resources available online to build your awareness surrounding the specific cultural heritage month and/or racially marginalized people.

Host a campus event.

Host an event on campus, such as a lunch and learn or celebratory event, to amplify people of racially marginalized identities. This could be an event that you hold in the athletics department, or it could be a collaborative event with organizations on campus and/or in the community.

Support local businesses.

- Take time to find businesses in the area that are owned by racially marginalized people. Try to build relationships with these businesses and look for opportunities to bring them to your campus events.
- Check out restaurants in your community that provide cuisine from the culture.

Share someone's story.

- Lift the voices of student-athletes and staff members of color by allowing them to share their stories. Provide space for them to share what this heritage month means to them, how they embrace their identity, and how they would like to be celebrated.
- Partner with your communications department to share stories about the specific community and recognize student-athletes, coaches and administrators from that culture.

Feb.

Black History Month:

The month of **February** is recognized as Black History Month, or African American History Month, to pay tribute to the generations of African Americans who have fought, and continue to fight, for equitable opportunities and rights in America.

May

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month:

Throughout **May**, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month is recognized to commemorate the contributions that Asian American and Pacific Islander people have made to U.S. history.

Sept.

Oct.

Hispanic Heritage Month:

A monthlong celebration of Hispanic and Latinx culture, Hispanic Heritage Month takes place from **Sept. 15 to Oct. 15** every year. The celebration begins on Sept. 15 to reflect the anniversary of the independence of multiple Latin American countries.

Nov.

Native American Heritage Month:

Held in **November** each year, Native American Heritage Month is a time to celebrate the rich traditions and significant cultural contributions of Native American peoples in the United States.



WAYS TO CENTER

Establish affinity groups.

Create a platform for your student-athletes and staff members of color to be heard by establishing an affinity resource group. Check out this resource on [how to create an affinity group](#).

Partner with campus and community organizations.

- Athletics departments can connect with campus organizations such as the multicultural center or identity-based organizations to host collaborative events.
- You can also connect with organizations surrounding your campus to establish relationships with the community. For example, there may be groups in the area that offer programming or volunteering opportunities.

Spotlight student-athletes and staff.

Ensure that you are highlighting the success of your student-athletes and staff of color. This does not have to be only during a cultural heritage month. Take time to ensure that your student-athletes and staff members of color are being recognized for their achievements on and off the playing field.

WAYS TO CHAMPION

Host a heritage game.

Host a game on campus that is dedicated to specific cultural heritage months. Build these games into the schedule each year to ensure that there is space to highlight these specific racial identities.

Host a diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging workshop.


Create space for your athletic department to engage in a DEIB workshop focused on racial identities so your department is building its knowledge. Invite a DEIB practitioner to lead this engagement and/or invite local community organizations to participate in this event.

Attend a sporting event.

Take time to support your student-athletes in their athletic endeavors by attending their games and/or practice.

Establish a culture of belonging.

Ensure that you are finding ways to establish a culture of belonging throughout the entire athletics department. Build relationships with people of all identities and ensure that they feel included, heard and valued throughout their experience on campus. Take interest in the academic and professional endeavors of your student-athletes of color to ensure they are prepared for life after sport.



It is important to celebrate specific identities not only during cultural heritage months but throughout the year. Recognition of these identities should be considered an opportunity to highlight the cultures during these months.

