

CELEBRATE
IMMIGRANT
HERITAGE
MONTH
06·2016

Immigrant Heritage Month 2016

Activation Toolkit for Elected Officials

Get Involved!

We are excitedly preparing for the third annual Immigrant Heritage Month (IHM 2016), a nationwide effort to gather and share inspirational stories of immigration in America, set to kick off in June.

As an elected official, you play an important role in your community. We encourage you to participate in Immigrant Heritage Month during the month of June by engaging constituents, faith leaders, civic organizers, businesses and other local elected officials and the media in celebration.

Your support will play an instrumental role in the success of the month and helping to spread the word about the importance of celebrating and sharing immigration stories across the generations.

This toolkit contains ideas and sample materials for celebrating Immigrant Heritage Month, including:

- Background information on IHM
- Ideas for promoting your involvement in IHM and strategies to engage your community, including IHM events and social media
- Sample materials to help support your IHM events

“Immigrant Heritage Month is a chance to share our American stories.”
- President Barack Obama, June 6, 2015

About Immigrant Heritage Month

The third-annual Immigrant Heritage Month will celebrate our country’s immigrant heritage—stories of individuals, families and communities who have contributed to the unique social fabric of a country whose greatness is fueled by its diversity. For the past two years, Immigrant Heritage Month has celebrated the millions of stories that make up our nation’s interwoven narrative during a joyous, month-long celebration in June.

Joining over one hundred celebrities and a national network of 238 partners for IHM 2015, the White House and Administration shared 18 blog posts from staff sharing their own immigrant heritage stories, including President Barack Obama himself, in a weekly address [Celebrating Immigrant Heritage Month](#). Members of Congress and other elected officials shared their personal stories with us, and the U.S. House and Senate both introduced resolutions recognizing June as Immigrant Heritage Month.

Building on the past two years’ success, IHM 2016 will include partnerships with community organizations, elected officials, corporations, media outlets, athletes, artists and thought leaders who will help us amplify our message, encouraging us all to celebrate our immigrant heritage as a source of pride.



How to Get Involved

While Immigrant Heritage Month isn't until June, there are plenty of ways to prepare and participate in advance. Now is the time to start promoting your involvement with IHM as well as engage your constituents and staff. Below are several ideas for getting involved now:

- Issue a proclamation officially declaring June as Immigrant Heritage Month
- Issue a press release announcing the proclamation and your involvement
- Post on social media announcing your involvement using our hashtags #ImmigrantHeritageMonth and #IHM2016
- Begin gathering immigrant heritage stories from constituents and staff to share during June

To kick off Immigrant Heritage Month and celebrate throughout June:

Online

- Share official Immigrant Heritage Month content on your own social media channels directly from our website or social media platforms
- Use social media to highlight your constituents' or staff's immigration stories
- On Thursdays, post an old photo that tells a story of immigrant heritage in your district or to highlight a member of your staff or constituents; using hashtag #tbt
- Include information about IHM in your newsletters or post on your website showcasing the work you do with the immigrants in your district or celebrating immigrant contributions to your community over the generations

Events

- Host a kickoff event with a broad range of community groups and individuals
- Attend or speak at a naturalization ceremony
- Host a roundtable to discuss the impact of immigrants in your district. Invite prominent immigrant entrepreneurs and leaders to be ambassadors of the local immigrant community
- Offer a Commendation of Excellence for immigrants in your district
- Host an event announcing an immigrant business is receiving an Small Business Administration loan, incorporate other immigrant entrepreneurs or business owners from the community
- Leverage existing community events during the month of June (e.g. Fathers Day, World Refugee Day)
- Offer a walking tour with historical narration of an immigrant neighborhood such as Little Italy; if appropriate, incorporate immigrant businesses in the event
- Host an immigrant food festival

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To help support these events, we have developed the following set of template materials for you to use, including:

- Media advisory template
- Press release template
- IHM proclamation template
- Floor speech templates (for state and federal elected officials)

If you'd like to discuss other ideas or potential events, please contact Keenan Toohey at keenan@welcome.us or 202-818-9910.



Media Advisory Template

[DATE]

PRESS CONTACT/NAME
XXX-XXX-XXXX
XXXXX

Media Advisory

[NAME] WILL HONOR [LEADERS/COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS/BUSINESSES] FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO CITY IMMIGRANT HERITAGE AND CULTURE DURING IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH

Nation-Wide Effort Includes Similar Events in [Chicago, Boston, NYC, San Francisco] to Celebrate Immigrant Heritage Month

CITY, STATE –NAME will honor [Leaders/Community Organizations/Businesses] for distinct contributions to CITY. The effort is part of a nation-wide kick off of Immigrant Heritage Month, an initiative to gather and share inspirational stories of American immigrants, past and present.

WHO:	NAME RECIPIENT #1 RECIPIENT #2 RECIPIENT #3 And many prominent members of the community
WHAT:	Remarks from NAME and participants
WHEN:	TIME DATE
WHERE:	LOCATION

For questions or to request an interview, please contact [PRESS CONTACT].

PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND –

[INSERT FULL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND ORG DESCRIPTIONS (ie why they are being recognized)]

ABOUT IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH –

Immigrant Heritage Month celebrates a United States that is fueled by immigrants from around the world and the ways in which America and the immigrants who have built our country are linked in a shared, productive history. Immigrant Heritage Month is organized by Welcome.us, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Learn more about the campaign and Immigrant Heritage Month by visiting Welcome.us.

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Press Release Template

[DATE]

PRESS CONTACT/NAME
XXX-XXX-XXXX
XXXXXX@welcome.us

Press Release

NAME HONORS [LEADERS/COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS/BUSINESSES] FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO CITY IMMIGRANT HERITAGE AND CULTURE DURING IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH

Nation-Wide Effort Includes Similar Events in [Chicago, Boston, NYC, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Austin]; National Leaders Speaking Out; and Launch of 3rd Annual Immigrant Heritage Month in the US

CITY, STATE – Today Mayor [Representative, etc] NAME honored three [Leaders/Community Organizations/Businesses] for distinct contributions to CITY. In [THEIR] remarks, [THEY] walked through how each contributed to the character of CITY – culturally, economically and historically – and made the city what it is today. The effort is part of a nation-wide kick off to Immigrant Heritage Month, an initiative community organizations, elected officials, corporations, media outlets, athletes, artists and thought leaders to gather and share inspirational stories of American immigrants.

RECIPIENTS:

- RECIPIENT #1
- RECIPIENT #2
- RECIPIENT #3

[Full details on participants and organizations included below.]

NAME spoke about the importance of immigrants in providing the cultural foundation for CITY's development and how the city's many distinct immigrant communities continue to [[character of the city]]

QUOTE UNIQUE TO CITY OR DISTRICT

PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND –

[INSERT FULL LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND ORG DISCRIPTIONS (ie why they are being recognized)]

ABOUT IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH –

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Sample IHM Proclamation (For City/State)

Whereas generations of immigrants from every corner of the globe have built our country's economy and created the unique character of our nation;

Whereas immigrants continue to grow businesses, innovate, strengthen our economy, and create American jobs in [DISTRICT/STATE];

Whereas immigrants have provided the United States with unique social and cultural influence, fundamentally enriching the extraordinary character of our nation;

Whereas immigrants have been tireless leaders not only in securing their own rights and access to equal opportunity, but have also campaigned to create a fairer and more just society for all Americans; and

Whereas despite these countless contributions, the role of immigrants in building and enriching our nation has frequently been overlooked and undervalued throughout our history and continuing to the present day:

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the [BLANK] assembled, that June 2016 is designated as "Immigrant Heritage Month."

For information on the impact that immigrants have in your state, please [click here](#).



Sample IHM Floor Speech

OPENING: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the immigrants of our great nation, a group that we are all connected to in some way or another. June is Immigrant Heritage Month and it is with great pride that I stand before you today to...

OPTION 1 sharing personal immigration story: [...tell you my own personal/own family's story of immigration. INSERT PERSONAL STORY]

OPTION 2 recognizing immigrant contributions in the city/district: [...share with you the tremendous benefits that immigrants have brought to the [City / Congressional District.]

OPTION 3 for June 20, World Refugee Day: [...celebrate the refugees who have come to our country on World Refugee Day. Today we recognize the strength and courage of refugees who have fled their homeland out of fear for their safety, as a result of violence and war, or to escape political or religious persecution. They may not have come to America because they wanted to, but we want them to know that our commitment to refugees remains the same as it did to those who first immigrated to our country through Ellis Island. As the great Emma Lazarus quote on the Statue of Liberty reads:

“Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”
Here in America, we welcome you with open arms.]

CONCLUSION: We all have our own welcome story – a story about how this country opened their arms to us or to our forefathers, and welcomed us/them to this great land of hopes, dreams and freedom. A place where you can become anyone, do anything. Please join me to celebrate America's immigrants – past, present and future.

