



## November 2022 Edition

### Native American Heritage Month

**Native American Heritage Month** was first celebrated over a century ago, beginning as American Indian Day in 1916. Since 1990, the month of November has honored Native Americans and the 574 American Indian and Alaska Native tribal nations in the United States.



#### Did You Know?

The Potomac River, which runs behind AMGA HQ in Alexandria, VA, was named by the many Native American tribes who used this land as a trading center and spoke one of the Algonquian family of languages. Since many of those languages are now extinct, it is not clear what *Potomac* meant or why this location was given that name. However, the Patowomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia is working to reconstruct their language as it was once spoken and may someday shed some historical light. If you'd like to learn more

about our local history, check out the Indigenous Peoples, Virginia Indians, and Alexandria information from the City of Alexandria.

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## Diabetes Awareness Month



November is also Diabetes Awareness Month. Native Americans face a very high risk of type 2 diabetes and diabetes complications, and many tribal nations and healthcare organizations have created programs for education, prevention, and treatment of diabetes which are population-specific to better address this health disparity.

The Indian Health Service (part of the Department of Health and Human Services) has managed the Special Diabetes Program for Indians for a quarter-century and reports that diabetes outcomes have begun to improve for Native American populations.

An intervention which addresses the risk factor of a diabetes-unfriendly diet is revitalizing traditional food practices, as suggested by the National Indian Council on Aging. Indigenous agriculture in Mesoamerica developed many of our modern food crops – famously including corn, domesticated around 10,000 years ago, but also squash, beans, tomatoes, avocados, quinoa, and many more foods – which were brought to North America along various Native trade routes and further cultivated to better suit drier or colder climates. These foods are staples of diabetes-friendly diets! Unfortunately, due to forced relocation from farmlands and disruption of indigenous education, these foods are all too often unavailable to the modern descendants of the people who developed them.

Other direct interventions include programs such as the Navajo Nation Special Diabetes Program, which focuses on encouraging physical activity, as well as providing healthy eating education; The Boys & Girls Clubs of American program [On the T.R.A.I.L. to Diabetes Prevention](#), which educates youth about diabetes and exercise; and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Eagle Books](#) for children, which promote healthy eating

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## Veterans Day

On Veterans Day 2022, the National Museum of the American Indian dedicates the new [National Native American Veterans Memorial](#), which honors the military service of Native Americans. Many Americans have heard of the [Navajo Code Talkers](#), famous for their service with the U.S. Marine Corps in World War II as they transmitted tactical information using a code built from the Diné (Navajo) language. Another World War II organization, the [Alaska Territorial Guard](#), brought together many different Alaska Native people; after the end of the war, they worked together to end segregation laws in Alaska and decades later were officially granted veteran status. Many Native Americans continue to serve in the United States Armed Forces today. As veterans, they face some particular challenges – some veterans can run into [paperwork barriers for accessing health care](#), which is split between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Indian Health Service – but they have particular support when their cultures include [ceremonies specifically for veterans](#).

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## Meet the DE&I Community

Over the last several months, you had the opportunity to meet the members of the DE&I Committee and learn why participating is important to them. For November, meet Laura Welsh. View [here](#).

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A graphic with a green and blue geometric background. The text "Resources of the Month" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font.

### Resources of the Month

[Website](#): Smithsonian: Celebrate Native American Heritage Month

[Website](#): Office of Minority Health: Native American Heritage Month

[Website](#): National Indian Health Board

[Website](#): Powwows.com: Pow Wow Meaning / What Is a Native American Pow Wow?

A graphic with a blue and green geometric background. The text "Raise Your Cultural IQ!" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font.

### Raise Your Cultural IQ!

#### Did You Know?

Did you know that Native Americans have the highest addiction rate in the US, despite only representing 2% of the population?

[Website](#): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Native Americans with Diabetes  
[Website](#): Sanford Health: Improving Health Care for Native Americans  
[Website](#): Smithsonian: The COVID-19 Outbreak in the Navajo Nation

[Article](#): AORN: Native American Patients: 6 Considerations for Culturally Sensitive Care

[Website](#): U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs: History of Veterans Day

[PDF](#): CDC: Vital Signs: Native Americans with Diabetes

[Article](#): NIH: Higher Rate of Substance Use Among Native American Youth on Reservations

[Video](#): PBS: How Alcohol Came to the American Indian



Do you have a resource you want to see in the next edition of the *DE&I Digest*? Next month, we will be summarizing the year with all AMGA has accomplished in 2022. Send resources to [DEICommittee@amga.org](mailto:DEICommittee@amga.org) for review by the DE&I Committee. Please ensure resources submitted are from reputable sources.

## Pow Wows

Native American pow wows are gatherings in which American Indians sing, dance, reconnect with old friends and celebrate their rich ancestral histories. If you are interested in attending this true cultural experience, there is one in our local area this weekend. The **46<sup>th</sup> Annual BAIC Pow Wow 2022** will be held on November 19 at the Maryland State Fairgrounds. All are welcome. More information [here](#).  
[8 Thing to Know Before Attending a Pow wow.](#)

Something to Celebrate!

**Happy Veterans Day to all the men and women who served to protect our freedom. We thank you for your service. Especially to AMGA's own:**



**Earlean Chambers, RN, M.H., CPHQ**

*First Lieutenant, United States Air Force*



**Johonna Nuby**

*Staff Sergeant, United States Air Force*

We also want to recognize the family members of AMGA staff that have served and bcontinue to serve in the Armed Forces!

- **Adam:** Grandfather and Cousin
- **Andi:** Mother, Father, Brother, Son
- **Bruce:** Father and Uncle
- **Chet:** Father and Grandfather
- **Danielle C.:** Husband, Uncles, Cousins, Sister-in Law, Father-in Law
- **Darryl:** Grandfathers, Uncle, Cousins
- **Jamie:** Grandfathers, Father, Brother, and Uncle
- **John K.:** Uncles and Cousins
- **Jerry:** Father
- **Michael F.:** Cousins
- **Mike H.:** Father, Grandfather, Father in-Law, Grandfather-in-Law.
- **Leslie:** Son
- **Randi:** Grandfathers, Cousin
- **Ryan:** Father
- **Scott:** Uncles
- **Tom:** Father and Father-in-Law
- **Sharon:** Father

Questions? Comments? Suggestions? We'd love to hear from you! Email the DE&I Committee at [DEICommittee@amga.org](mailto:DEICommittee@amga.org)

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