



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
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ASA HUTCHINSON
GOVERNOR

KENDALL W. PENN
MAJOR GENERAL
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

NGAR-HRO-EEM

1 November 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR All Arkansas National Guard Personnel

SUBJECT: National American Indian Heritage Month 2021

1. November is designated as National American Indian Heritage Month. This year's theme is **"Grounded in Tradition, Resilient in Spirit."** We encourage each of you to take this opportunity to educate yourselves on our Native American citizens' history and heritage, and to help celebrate their achievements, cultures, and traditions.
2. National American Indian Heritage Month celebrates and recognizes American Indians for their respect for natural resources and the earth, having served with valor in our nation's conflicts, and for their many other distinct and important contributions to the United States. For more than 200 years, they have bravely answered the call to defend our nation, serving with distinction in every branch of the United States Armed Forces. During World War I and World War II, the U.S. military employed a number of American Indian servicemen to use their tribal languages as a military code that could not be broken by the enemy; known as "Code Talkers," they played a pivotal role in attaining victory in both wars.
3. In 1924, Congress enacted the Indian Citizenship Act. In 1986, Congress passed Public Law 99-471 and President Ronald Reagan signed the proclamation authorizing American Indian Week. And in 1990, Congress passed Public Law 101-343 which authorized and requested President George H. W. Bush to issue a proclamation designating the month of November 1990 as National American Indian Heritage Month. Since 1995, every United States President has issued annual proclamations which designate November as National American Indian Heritage Month (or since 2009 as National Native American Heritage Month). These proclamations celebrate the contributions of the American Indians, and I urge each of you to learn more about their cultures.
4. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact CW2 Patrick Jacob, EEO Specialist, at 501-212-4222 or DSN 962-4222.

KENDALL W. PENN
Major General
The Adjutant General

CULTURAL
AWARENESS

OBSERVANCE



NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH - NOVEMBER



**Grounded in Tradition
Resilient in Spirit**

NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH
NOVEMBER

November is National American Indian Heritage Month. It is a time to celebrate the rich and diverse cultures, traditions, and histories of American Indians and Alaskan Natives, the first people of the United States.

Cherokee Indian and NASA physicist, J. C. Elliott-High Eagle, authored the legislation for American Indian Awareness Week. It was signed in 1976, making October 10-16 the first official week of national recognition for the American Indian since the founding of the Nation.

This set a precedent which was followed by later public laws that expanded the observance to what we now know as National American Indian Heritage Month.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the nation's population of American Indians and Alaska Natives, including those of more than one race, was 9.7 million.

Currently, there are 574 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and more than 100 state-recognized tribes across the United States.

Each have their own unique Native history, beliefs, governance structure, and culture.

Sovereignty is the right of a nation or group of people to be self-governing and it is the most fundamental concept that defines the relationship between the government of the United States and governments of American Indian/Alaskan tribes.

American Indians and Native Alaskans are technically U.S. citizens first and have the additional option of becoming citizens of their tribe or village as enrolled tribal members.

The Department of Defense along with the rest of our nation, celebrates the first people to live on the land we all value. American Indians and Alaska Natives have bravely defended and shaped our country's character and our cultural heritage.

A new generation has assumed this charge from their elders, and they continue to serve not only their nations but the United States with dignity and honor.



Grounded in Tradition Resilient in Spirit

NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH
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