



# NCR Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Cultural Observances, Awareness Information and Events

## National American Indian Heritage Month

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### Did You Know?

It wasn't until 1924 when all Native Americans were granted citizenship, after congress enacted the Indian Citizen Act. However, many laws at state level prevented voting rights for all. It took 40 years following 1924 for all 50 states to allow Native Americans to vote.

There are currently 574 different federally recognized Native America tribes. Approximately 229 are located in Alaska and the rest are located in 35 other states.

Native American tribes have what is called tribal sovereignty, which means that they have the right to govern themselves, similar to state government.

In 2019, there were 324 distinct federal recognized Native American land reservations. 78% Native Americans live outside of the tribal areas.

The sport of hockey originated with the Saux, Foxes, and Assiniboine people, who were among the Native American tribes who played a game called "shinny," where a ball was hit down a field (and in the winter, over ice using a curved stick.

### Influence of Indian Tribes on U.S. Constitution

In 1787, the U.S. Constitution was in the planning stage. There were no examples of contemporary democracies in Europe. The only forms of government at that time were those of the Native American tribes. The Iroquois Confederacy had formed a multi-state government that ensured individual governance and freedoms. This confederacy structure represented five tribes and was federal in nature. It operated under the Great Law of Peace, a doctrine of 117 codicils where tribes handled their own affairs but came together to solve issues of common importance. Historians agree that the Iroquois were a major influence in the writings of the U.S. Constitution.

In 1988, Congress passed a resolution formally acknowledging the influence of the Iroquois Confederacy on the U.S. Constitution. It reads, "The confederation of the original 13 colonies into one republic was influenced by the political system developed by the Iroquois Confederacy, as were many of the democratic principles incorporated into the constitution itself." In addition, the resolution stated, "the continuing government-to-government relationship between Indian tribes and the United States established in the Constitution," reaffirmed the legitimacy and sovereignty of Native nations and their governments.

### Native Americans Currently in Congress

Tom Cole – Chickasaw - Oklahoma  
Markwayne Mullin – Cherokee – Oklahoma  
Sherice Davids – Ho-Chunk – Kansas  
Yvette Herrell – Cherokee – New Mexico  
Mary Peltola – Yup'ik - Alaska