

March Diversity Tip Sheet: Why Celebrate Women's History Month

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March is Women's History Month. In the United States, the observance began when President Ronald Reagan, at the request of Congress, issued a proclamation declaring the week of March 7, 1982 as Women's History Week. In 1987, the Women's History Project petitioned Congress to declare March as Women's History Month. President Reagan then issued [Presidential Proclamation 5619](#) proclaiming March 1987 as "Women's History Month" and calling upon all Americans to mark the month with observances to honor the achievements of American women.

Between 1988 and 1994, Congress passed additional resolutions requesting and authorizing the President to proclaim March of each year as Women's History Month. Since 1995, Presidents Clinton, Bush and Obama have issued a series of annual proclamations designating the month of March as "Women's History Month." Today, events recognizing women's accomplishments and supporting women's needs and endeavors are sponsored by businesses, government agencies, museums, colleges and social organizations.

Many of the month's events are tied to International Women's Day which is celebrated on March 8. Throughout the world, it is a day for recognizing women's achievements while at the same time recognizing that, in many ways and in many places, women do not have equal rights. The first observance of International Women's Day took place on March 13, 1911 in Switzerland, Denmark, Austria and Germany. Since 1913, International Women's Day has been observed on March 8. Many early observances centered on attaining women's suffrage. As women gained the right to vote in countries throughout the world, women turned their attention to other issues. On March 25, 1911, two weeks after the first International Women's Day, the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire spurred interest in the rights and protection of working women in New York and elsewhere in the United States.

During the month of March, we celebrate the achievements of all women.

Explore Additional Resources:

The Library of Congress: <http://womenshistorymonth.gov/>

The Library of Congress, National Archives and Records Administration, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Gallery of Art, National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum join in paying tribute to the generations of women whose commitment to nature and the planet have proved invaluable to society.

The National Women's History Project: <http://nwhp.org/whm/>

Hosts a great deal of information, including a section on celebrating women in the workplace.

Presidential Proclamation: Women's History Month 2015:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/27/presidential-proclamation-women-s-history-month>

The National Women's History Museum:

<http://www.nwhm.org/education-resources/history/resources-and-links>

Includes quotes, resources and links and more.