

September Diversity Tip Sheet: Buenos Dias! September is National Hispanic Heritage Month

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Hispanic Heritage Month actually began as National Hispanic Heritage Week to honor the independence of Hispanic countries from September 15-18. In 1974, then President Gerald R. Ford proclaimed the week beginning September 10, 1974, and ending September 16, 1974, as National Hispanic Heritage Week. In 1989, it became a month-long celebration which we now honor every year.

Did you know? Hispanic people were among the earliest European settlers in the New World, what is today the United States. Hispanic Americans have roots in Europe, Africa, and South and Central America and close cultural ties to Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, South America, and Spain.

According to the most recent census, 50.5 million people or 16% of the total U.S. population are Hispanic or Latino origin.

Do you recognize these names?

Isabelle Allende – Award winning Chilean-American author. Her best seller was *The House of the Spirits* published in 1982.

Cesar Chavez – Mexican American who fought for union and labor rights and was successful in improving working conditions for farm workers in California in the 1960s and 1970s.

Ted Cruz – U.S. Senator and previous Solicitor General for the State of Texas. His father was tortured and imprisoned in Cuba and fled to the United States where he met his wife who is from an Irish/Italian working-class family. He is running for the President of the United States on the Republican ticket.

Jose Feliciano – Puerto Rican music artist. Surely, you have chimed in singing “Feliz Navidad.”

Illeana Ros-Lehtinen – 1st Hispanic woman to be elected to the U.S. Congress.

Eva Longoria – actress and political activist.

Robert Menendez – New Jersey Senator and author of *Growing American Roots*. He is the son of Cuban immigrants. He is the host of his annual Hispanic Heritage Month since 2010.

Ellen Ochoa – NASA’s first Hispanic woman astronaut. She served on a 9-day mission on the space shuttle Discovery.

Anthony Romero – Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union (“ACLU”).

Mark Sanchez – Mexican American quarterback for the Philadelphia Eagles.

Sonia Sotomayor – First Hispanic Supreme Court Justice – born in the Bronx of Puerto Rican parents.

Resources:

Proclamation 9016 of September 13, 2013 by President Barack Obama

<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/commemorative-observations/hispanic-heritage.php>

An Interview with Lin Miranda. He is the script writer, and wrote the lyrics and music for *Hamilton* for which he stars as the title character in the Broadway Musical Hit.

<http://www.timeforkids.com/news/interview-lin-manuel-miranda/270366>

Kids Video

<http://www.timeforkids.com/photos-video/video/hispanic-heritage-month-171416>