

# HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

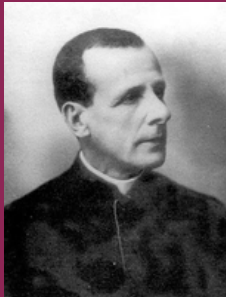
September 15th - October 15th

**National Hispanic Heritage Month** is a celebration that began in 1968 as a weeklong observation under President Lyndon B. Johnson. It was later expanded to a month-long celebration under the Reagan administration in 1988 and signed into law. While we celebrate Hispanic and Latin American communities every month, during this time we give extra recognition to their rich history, cultural diversity, and significant contributions to the U.S. and beyond. The dates for this celebration are significant because they span several days that mark the independence of Latin American countries such as:

- Costa Rica – September 15th (from Spain 1821 and from Mexico 1823)
- El Salvador – September 15th (from Spain 1821)
- Guatemala – September 15th (from Spain 1821)
- Honduras – September 15th (from Spain 1821)
- Nicaragua – September 15th (from Spain 1821)
- Mexico – September 16th (from Spain 1821)
- Chile – September 18th (from Spain 1810)

Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to amplify the voices and experiences of the Hispanic and Latin American communities. It is a time to acknowledge their vital contributions to the American experience. Hispanic and Latin American influences are tightly woven into the fabric of American life and liberties. From music, art, politics, and military operations, the Hispanic and Latin American communities have undoubtedly shaped our nation. Join us in acknowledging some of the innovators and heroes who have impacted American history in notable ways.

## Roberto Landell de Moura



### The Originator of the Wireless Phone

Landell was born in 1861, a Brazilian native of Rio de Grande do Sul. In 1899 he successfully transmitted audio over 7 kilometers. In 1901 he would do it again. Landell patented a device providing two-way phonetic transmission over a distance, wired or wireless, through space, earth, and water. In 1901 he moved to the U.S. to patent his inventions of the "wave transmitter", "wireless phone", and the "wireless telegraph".

## Lt. Col. Olga E. Custodio



### The first Latina U.S. Air Force Pilot

Born in 1953 to a military family in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Custodio went on to become the first Latina US military pilot. She served in the United States Air Force for 24 years, retiring in 2003 as a Lieutenant Colonel with over 11,000 hours of flight time logged.

## Sergeant First Class Leroy Petry



### A Notable Mexican American Medal of Honor Recipient

Sgt. First Class Leroy Petry was born in Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1979 to two Mexican-American parents. He enlisted in the Army in 1999. During his time of service, he had a total of 8 deployments supporting missions in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He was awarded with the Medal of Honor for his combat operations on May 26th, 2008 in Afghanistan. While on a mission to capture a high-value target, Sgt. Petry and his fellow rangers came under intense enemy fire. During the ensuing fire, Sgt. Petry suffered wounds to both of his legs from a grenade. Despite his injuries, he demonstrated extraordinary valor and selflessness when another enemy grenade landed near his fellow soldiers. Sgt. Petry picked it up and attempted to throw it away from them. As he released the grenade, it detonated, causing him to lose his right hand. Sgt. Petry's heroic actions saved the lives of two of his fellow Rangers, and his courage and sacrifice were recognized by the Obama administration.

This Hispanic Heritage Month we encourage you to celebrate by learning more about the rich and diverse culture that comes from Hispanic and Latin American countries. Ways to celebrate include:

- Engaging with our Hispanic and Latin American colleagues and peers to learn more about their cultural background and experience within DMAVA and beyond.
- Supporting a Hispanic and Latin American owned small business.
- Exploring the diversity of Hispanic and Latin American culture through food and trying something new.
- Visiting a museum and/or exhibit that highlights Hispanic and Latin American culture.

To deepen your independent learning and celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, access a small list of self-directed experiential resources [here](#).