

# April Heritage and Awareness Month - 4-8-22

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To the UConn Community:

April is an important month for many members of the UConn community. The [Office for Diversity and Inclusion](#) and the [Provost's Office](#) would like to take this opportunity to remind you of several celebrations, commemorations, and moments of raising awareness for members of our community:

**Arab American Heritage Month:** During the month of April, cultural institutions, schools, legislatures, and organizations across the country formally recognize the achievements of Arab Americans. Over 3.7 million Americans have roots tracing to 22 Arab countries across the Middle East and North Africa, representing diverse faiths, races, and languages. Efforts to honor their rich and diverse cultural heritages, as well as the many contributions they have made to American society, have been underway since 2017. This year, 37 US states have issued proclamations commemorating Arab American Heritage Month, as has President Biden, who in 2021 became the first US president to publicly acknowledge the celebration of Arab American Heritage. UConn wishes a happy Arab American Heritage Month to all who commemorate it!

**Asian American Heritage Month:** Every April, UConn commemorates Asian American Heritage Month – which is observed nationally in May – to honor the contributions Asian, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders have made to our country, our state, and our university. We believe that 2022 is an especially important year to celebrate Asian, Asian American, and Pacific Islander (AAPI) members of the UConn community. The AAPI community been unjustly targeted for racially based violence and harassment over the last two years. This increase in racially-based violence and harassment has a negative impact on the living, learning, and working conditions for AAPI members of our community – and, in turn, for all members of our community.

This year we are excited to honor the AAPI members of our community together and in-person after two years of virtual events. The [Asian and Asian American Cultural Center](#) will be hosting a month full of events. Some highlights include:

- A month-long art mural in the Women’s Center acknowledging the hard work and achievements of Asian American women throughout history
- [Art & Activism – Ruby Ibarra \(4/14\)](#)

See a [full list of events here](#). We look forward to seeing you!

**Autism Acceptance Month:** UConn recognizes Autism Acceptance Month – formerly Autism Awareness Month – each April. Autism impacts a large segment of the population: 1 in 44 children are diagnosed with autism and there are currently over 7 million Americans from all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic standings on the autism spectrum. Autism Acceptance Month is aimed at raising awareness about the experiences and needs of those affected by autism, as well as ensuring that all those affected are able to achieve the highest quality of life possible. The name has been changed from “awareness” to “acceptance” to indicate the need to create a world where everyone in the autism community is connected to the help they need when they need it, and where the community’s critical needs for inclusion, connections, and support are met. [Click here to see UConn’s resources dedicated to this community.](#)

**Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month:** Every April, UConn renews its commitment to eliminating sexual violence on our campuses, in our state, and across the country. Sexual assault, harassment, violence, and abuse can happen anywhere: in the US, nearly 1 in 5 women experience rape or attempted rape. Sexual violence disproportionately impacts women of color, Native and Indigenous women, immigrant women, LGBTQIA+ women, and disabled women. Moreover, people under the age of 30, especially college-aged individuals, face the highest rates of sexual assault, including 21% of transgender or non-binary students, 18% of female students, and 4% of male students. Ending sexual violence requires care and commitment from all of us.

ODI is committed to raising awareness about sexual violence and prevention and supporting survivors of sexual violence. The ODI Central Office and [Cultural Centers and Programs](#) are [here for you](#). UConn employees are obligated to advise the [Office of Institutional Equity](#) if they receive a report of sexual assault; cultural center full-time employees are exempt from this, however, which means [that we can support you without reporting your information](#) (unless you request it or an incident involves a minor). We also have events like a talk on Black Feminist Perspectives on campus sexual assault (April 15) and [“Take Back the Night”](#) (April 20) to honor sexual assault survivors.

ODI also supports University efforts to hold accountable the individuals who commit sexual assault, violence, and harassment:

- Report an incident at [inform.uconn.edu](https://inform.uconn.edu)
- Report an incident through the [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#)

You can find more resources through the [Title IX Office](#) and [Responding to Student Disclosures of Sexual Violence](#). You may also find information on the President's Task Force on Combating Sexual Violence on the [President's website](#).

**Religious Holidays:** April 2022 is a significant month for the religious practices of many members of our community (listed chronologically):

**Ramadan (April 2 – May 2) and Eid al-Fitr (May 2-3):** A holy month for Muslims that is used for spiritual reflection and growth, to help those in need, and spending time with loved ones. Muslims around the world typically observe a fast during daylight hours. [UConn Dining will have specially prepared meals](#) and will set up a station to collect meals after sundown.

**Vaisakhi (April 14):** This holiday marks the start of the Punjabi New Year and also celebrates the year (1699) when Sikhism was established as a formal order by Guru Gobind Singh. The day is observed by temple worship, feasting and dancing.

**Passover (April 15 – April 23):** This is a celebration of the Jewish redemption from slavery in ancient Egypt. Members of the Jewish community all over the world observe Passover by hosting seder meals. UConn events include [Passover at Chabad](#) and annual seder meals [hosted by Hillel](#). UConn will offer specially prepared [kosher meal options](#).

**Easter (April 17):** Easter is a Christian holiday to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is preceded by a Holy Week that begins with Palm Sunday (April 10). Festivities typically include special church services, music, flowers, the ringing of church bells, and family gatherings with a meal on Easter Sunday, the holiest of all Christian feast days.

**Orthodox Easter (April 24):** The celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ by Orthodox Christians, especially in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Greece, Lebanon, the Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Ukraine, and Russia.

We welcome the celebration of each of these holidays on our campuses and encourage support for those requiring accommodations. You can find information about guidance on academic accommodations for religious observations on a [new webpage hosted by the Provost's Office](#).

To see more information about resources and events happening this month and throughout the remainder of the semester, please visit our events page at [www.diversity.uconn.edu/events](http://www.diversity.uconn.edu/events).

Sincerely,

Carl and Frank

Carl Lejuez

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Frank Tuitt

Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer