National Hispanic Heritage Month

History and Meaning

Since 1968, Americans all over the nation have observed National Hispanic Heritage Month by celebrating the vast histories, cultures and contributions of Americans whose ancestors come from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. Expanded in 1988 to cover a 30-day period, Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, the dates commemorate the anniversary of the independence for some Latin American countries and, Columbus Day (Día de la Raza).

Is It Hispanic or Latino?

While both terms are used interchangeably, they are not one and the same. “Hispanic” usually refers to ancestral roots in ancient España, which is now the nation of Spain. “Latino” specifically refers to people of Latin American descent—the Caribbean, South America and Central America. It is important to note, however, that both terms refer to ethnicity not race. In the United States the term “Hispanic” traditionally covers the culture and people formerly of Spanish rule, with a majority of these populations speaking the Spanish language. The term “LatínX” is quickly gaining popularity among the general public and the media as a gender-neutral alternative to “Latino.”

Health Issues in the Hispanic/Latino Population

Poor housing, educational and linguistic barriers, and low access to health care coverage contribute to significant health and health care disparities in the Baltimore Hispanic/Latino population.

73 percent of Hispanics/Latinos speak a primary language other than English.

One in five U.S. Hispanics/Latinos have no health care insurance whatsoever.

In 2012, only 7.5 percent of U.S. physicians who had Graduate Medical Education training were Hispanic/Latino. The low number contributes to cultural and linguistic barriers to care.

Population Demographics

In Baltimore, the Hispanic/Latino population is concentrated in several older East Baltimore neighborhoods, including Fells Point, Greektown, Highlandtown and Patterson Park. The Hispanic/Latino community has been instrumental in invigorating Baltimore City’s dwindling population. They energize the economy and strive to make better lives for themselves, their families and their communities.
Addressing Community Needs

To eliminate health disparities and promote individual and community health and wellness, Johns Hopkins works tirelessly to meet the needs of the Hispanic/Latino population. To that end, Johns Hopkins partners with several institutions in East Baltimore to offer an array of medical services outside of typical hospital settings. Johns Hopkins offers bilingual interpreters and health care providers, community outreach workers and low fees. In 2013, Johns Hopkins established Centro SOL, which is focused on promoting equity in health and opportunity for Latinos by advancing clinical care, research, education and advocacy at Johns Hopkins and beyond in active partnership with the Latino community.

Resources Serving the Hispanic/Latino Community at Johns Hopkins

Hopkins Familia Hispanic/LatinX Employee Resource Group
Join the email list, here

CLINICAL CARE RESOURCES
Esperanza Center Partnership (http://source.jhu.edu/volunteer-agencies/cultural-and-ethnic/esperanza.html)
The Care-A-Van (https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns-hopkins_bayview/community_services/services/care_a_van/index.html)
HIV Latino Outreach (https://main.ccghe.net/content/hiv-latino-outreach-program-baltimore-city-health-department)

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT GROUPS FOR ADULTS
Centro SOL Testimonios (https://www.jhcentrosol.org/)
Suicide Prevention Response (https://www.jhcentrosol.org/)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND WELLNESS
Centro SOL Embajadores de Salud (https://www.jhcentrosol.org/)
Diabetes Prevention Program (https://www.jhcentrosol.org/)

JH LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION SERVICE
(http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/patient_care/language-assistance.html)

EDUCATIONAL/PIPELINE
Summer Scholars Program Centro SOL (https://www.jhcentrosol.org/)

CITY/STATE
CASA de Maryland (wearecasa.org)
Esperanza Center (http://www.catholiccharities-md.org/immigrants/)
UnidosUS (unidosus.org)
Baltimore City Health Department (https://health.baltimorecity.gov/)
Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (https://mima.baltimorecity.gov/)