IAG DIVERSITY CALENDAR

Dates & Meanings

The following days, weeks, and months have been recommended by the IDEA Advisory Group (IAG) to formally comprise the IAG Diversity Calendar. These dates are important for recognition and remembrance in Muskoka and have been chosen with a diversity, equity and inclusion lens.

JANUARY

27 – Holocaust Remembrance Day

- There are several holocaust remembrance and awareness dates, but this one specifically memorializes the victims of the Holocaust.
- The date marks the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in 1945 by the Red Army.
- We remember the tragic loss of over 6 million Jewish people from across Europe, as well as the loss of countless people from other minority populations.
- Resource: The Shoah Foundation - https://sfi.usc.edu/

29 – National Day of Remembrance of the Quebec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia

- This terrorist attack on a Quebec City Mosque left 6 dead and 19 injured. The event simultaneously highlighted and exacerbated the Islamophobia present across Canada.
- This day provides an opportunity to honour the memory of the victims, to recognize those who selflessly and courageously put themselves in harm's way to protect others and to express solidarity with the survivors of this tragedy.
- Resource: https://sencanada.ca/en/info-page/parl-44-1/ridr-islamophobia/

FEBRUARY

Black History Month

- Celebrates and highlights Black History and culture, and honours ancestors and leaders of Black communities.
- Provides an opportunity to highlight the ways that anti-Black racism and rhetoric negatively affects Black Canadians.
- While it began as a week in the United States almost 100 years ago, Canada didn't recognize any Black History dates until 1995.

- Resource: https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/black-history-month.html

Last Wednesday of February – Pink Shirt Day/Anti-Bullying Day

- To raise awareness about the prevalence of bullying and to encourage people to stand up to bullies.
- While not specifically an LGBTQ+ awareness day, it was borne of homophobic bullying against a gay teen who wore a pink shirt to school, something that often gets erased in recent messaging about the day.
- Resource: https://www.pinkshirtday.ca/

MARCH

8 – International Women's Day

- A day which gives focus to issues such as gender equality, reproductive rights, and violence and abuse against women.
- IWD became a mainstream global holiday following its promotion by the United Nations in 1977.
- Resource: https://www.internationalwomensday.com/

21 – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

- Annual observance on day when police in Sharpeville, South Africa, opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against apartheid "pass laws" in 1960.
- Racial discrimination refers to the practice of treating people differently or unjustly because of their race, ethnic origin, skin colour, language or religion.
- Resource: https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-racism-day

31 – International Trans Day of Visibility

- Started in 2009, TDOV is dedicated to celebrating transgender people and raising awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide, as well as a celebration of their contributions to society.
- Resource: https://egale.ca/egale-in-action/trans-day-of-visibility-2024/

MAY

Asian Heritage Month

- Recognizes the contributions of Asian communities to Canada's culture and the achievements of people of Asian origins.
- May was chosen to honor Manzo Nagano, the first known Japanese person to immigrate to Canada.
- Resource: https://redi.med.ubc.ca/asian-heritage-month/

5 – National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

- Also known as Red Dress Day, this is a day to remember, honour and fight for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit people, who are disproportionately affected by domestic and police violence.
- Resource: https://humanrights.ca/resource-guide/missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-girls-and-2slgbtqi-people

17 – International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia

- Created in 2004 to draw attention to the violence and discrimination experienced by those with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, and sex characteristics.
- Resource: https://may17.org/

Last Sunday in May – National AccessAbility Week

- An opportunity to celebrate Canadians with disabilities and raise awareness of the critical need for accessibility and inclusion for all in our communities and workplaces.
- Red Shirt Day falls on the Wednesday of NAAW, and creates a visible display of solidarity with disabled communities.
- Resource: https://www.rickhansen.com/NAAW

JUNE

21 – National Indigenous Peoples Day

- A day dedicated to dedicated to celebrating the rich diversity, history, resilience, and culture of Indigenous Peoples.
- Provides an opportunity to learn about Indigenous history and cultural traditions and about how to take action and commit to Reconciliation.
- Resource: https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/national-aboriginal-day

JULY

Last Sunday in July – Muskoka Pride

- Local event to celebrate 2SLGBTQ+ communities across Muskoka.
- Events held leading up to the date comprise Muskoka Pride Week.
- Resource: https://www.muskokapride.com/

AUGUST

1 – Emancipation Day/Month (all of August)

- Commemorates the day in 1834 when the Slavery Abolition Act came into effect.
- A day to Reflect on the history of enslavement and segregation in Canada and Acknowledge the contributions of Black communities.
- Resource: https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/emancipation-day.html

SEPTEMBER

30 – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

- A day to recognize the history and ongoing impacts of the residential school system in Canada, and honour the survivors and their relatives.
- Also known as Orange Shirt Day, employing the Every Child Matters slogan to acknowledge the missing and murdered children who didn't survive residential schools.
- A day to reflect on how to meaningfully move our country away from colonialism and towards Truth & Reconciliation.
- Resource: https://nctr.ca/

NOVEMBER

20 – Transgender Day of Remembrance

- Honours Trans, Nonbinary and gender diverse people who have lost their lives to transphobic violence.
- Started in 1999 by transgender advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith as a vigil to honor the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was killed in 1998.
- Resource: https://glaad.org/tdor/

25 – International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

- Since 1981 this day has been marked to bring awareness to the prevalence of gender-based violence and femicide and work towards the eradication of violence against women.
- Resource: https://www.un.org/en/observances/ending-violence-against-women-day

DECEMBER

2 – International Day of Persons with Disabilities

- Increases awareness of diverse abilities and promotes the rights, inclusion and well-being of persons with disabilities in every aspect of life.
- Resource: https://idpwd.org/

6 – National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

- A day to remember the fourteen women killed in a misogynist act of violence at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal in 1989.
- Resource: https://www.polymtl.ca/december6/

10 – Human Rights Day

- Marks the day in 1948 when the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Resource: https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day