



ABIDE Corner

The month of May gives us many chances to celebrate diversity at work and in our personal lives.

Older Americans Month

Older Americans Month is a time to recognize older Americans' contributions. The Administration for Community Living has given Older Americans Month the 2025 theme of "Flip The Script on Aging", which focuses on transforming how society perceives, talks about, and approaches aging. One such person who lives as if he flipped "The Script on Aging", is Dr. Bernard Harris, Jr. He is a former NASA astronaut, pilot, physician, philanthropist, scuba diver, author, and he is 68 years old. He became the first African American to perform an extra-vehicular activity (spacewalk) during the second of his two Space Shuttle flights. He is being honored this month by being a member of the NASA Hall of Fame.



Harris in 2014

He had watched the Apollo 11 mission on TV in 1969 at the age of 13. With the help of his science teacher, he and other students formed a science club and a rocket club. Later, he received a B.S. biology degree from the University of Houston, an MD degree from Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine, and completed a residency in internal medicine at the Mayo Clinic in 1985. He completed a National Research Council Fellowship at NASA's Ames

Research Center in 1987 and conducted research in musculature physiology and disuse.

Dr. Harris trained as a flight surgeon at the Aerospace School of Medicine at Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio in 1988. He became an astronaut in July 1991 and qualified for assignment as a mission specialist on future Space Shuttle flight crews. He flew on board Columbia for ten days (4/26 – 5/6/93). Dr. Harris was assigned as a mission specialist on STS-55, Spacelab D-2 in 1991 and was part of the payload crew of that Spacelab (his first mission) to conduct research in physical and life sciences. His second mission was as the payload commander on STS-63, which was the first flight of the new joint Russian-American Space Program. During this flight, he became the first African-American to walk in space. He logged 198 hours, 29 minutes in space, completed 129 orbits, and traveled over 2.9 million miles.

He received a master's degree in biomedical science from The University of Texas Medical Branch in 1996 and an MBA from the University of Houston in 1999. He is also a licensed private pilot and certified scuba diver. In 1998, Dr. Harris founded The Harris Foundation, a Houston, Texas-based non-profit organization, whose stated mission is "to invest in community-based initiatives to support education, health, and wealth. THF supports programs that empower individuals, in particular minorities and other economically and/or socially disadvantaged, to recognize their potential and pursue their dreams. For more information on Older Americans Month and Dr. Bernard Harris, please refer to these links:

- [Administration for Community Living](#)
- [Harris Bernard Bio, NASA](#)
- [UH Alumnus to be Inducted into the Astronaut Hall of Fame](#)

Asian American-Native Hawaiian-Pacific Islander Month

This year's theme for Asian American-Native Hawaiian-Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Month is "A Legacy of Leadership and Resilience". This is a time to reflect on and celebrate the invaluable historical and cultural contributions of the AANHPI community. Michele Wong Krause is the Board Chair of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and is the first person of Hispanic, Asian, and Native Hawaiian heritage to assume this role. She has dedicated years of service to the organization's Executive Committee, the Transit Board Members Committee, and the Leadership APTA Committee. Her extensive background in law and governance, coupled with a passionate commitment to fostering inclusivity and equity, enhances the power of public transportation to transform lives and unite communities. For more information on AANHPI Month and Michele Wong Krause, please refer to these links:



Michele Wong Krause

- [Federal Asian Pacific American Council \(FAPAC\) page on Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#)
- [AAPI Trailblazers in Public Transportation](#)
- [Dallas City Council names Wong Krause to DART Board](#)

Jewish American Heritage Month

Each May, hundreds of organizations and Americans of all backgrounds join together to discover, explore, and celebrate the vibrant and varied American Jewish experience as a part of Jewish American Heritage Month.

David Barnard Steinman was an American civil engineer. He designed the Mackinac Bridge, as well as other bridges, and was a published author. He built bridges in the United States, Thailand, England, Portugal, Italy, Brazil, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Canada, Korea, Iraq, and Pakistan. He was the child of Jewish immigrants and grew up in New York City under the shadows of the Brooklyn Bridge. The Williamsburg Bridge was constructed as he grew up, along with other bridges in the area, and it is understood that this is where he obtained his interest in bridges.

He worked to put himself through both the City College of New York in 1906 and then Columbia University, where he completed three additional degrees culminating in a PhD in Civil Engineering. His thesis was on a steel truss arch design for the Henry Hudson Bridge. He worked on many bridges from the 1920's through the 1940's, either under an engineering firm, a duo, or as a part of his own firm. He also became president of the American Association of Engineers in the 1930's.

In the 1950's he was heavily involved in all aspects of the construction of the Mackinac Bridge from start to finish, even though he suffered a heart attack in 1952. The "Mighty Mac", completed in 1957, and at the time the longest suspended span between anchors, was his last major achievement. In 1960, he was elevated as the 16th National Honor Member of Chi Epsilon, the national civil engineering honor society. Steinman died in 1960. At the time of his death, he was president of the Society of the History of Technology. The Steinman engineering firm is now part of the Parsons Corporation as of 1988.



David B. Steinman on the
Mackinac Bridge

More information can be found on Jewish American Heritage Month and David B. Steinman at these sites:

- [Jewish American Heritage Month](#)
- [David B. Steinman bio](#)

The International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia

May 17th is known as the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia. This celebration was created in 2004 to draw attention to the violence and discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex people, and all of those with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, and sex characteristics. The US Department of State made a [press statement](#) on this celebration.



Pete Buttigieg

Pete Buttigieg is a former United States Secretary of Transportation, former naval officer, and former South Bend, Indiana mayor. During his service as mayor in 2015, he came out as gay. He ran in the 2020 Democratic Party presidential primaries and became the first openly gay man to launch a Democratic presidential campaign. After dropping out of the race and endorsing Joe Biden for president, President-Elect Biden named Buttigieg as his nominee for Secretary of Transportation in December 2020. When his nomination was confirmed on February 2, 2021, he became the first openly gay Cabinet secretary in US history.

More information can be found on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia and Pete Buttigieg at these sites:

- [About the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia](#)
- [A Conversation with United States Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg](#)

Each of these celebrations can yield a perfect time for people to seek the knowledge of others so a tolerant world can be built, welcoming everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from. Get involved in your WTSI chapter by joining a committee or attending an event or webinar. Help our chapter grow!

Upcoming Events

- 2025 Illinois Bike & Walk Summit, May 7-8, 2025, 8:30am-4:30pm daily, Wyndham Springfield City Centre, 700 E. Adams Street, Springfield, IL, 62701. More information is available at this link: https://rideillinois.org/events/2025-illinois-bike-walk-summit/?utm_source=America+Walks&utm_campaign=24bbd10fda-February+Newsletter+2025&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_f2013291e9-24bbd10fda-583890763
- WTS Go Gala, May 15, 5:30-8:30 p.m., Union Station, Raleigh, NC. More information is available at this link: <https://www.wtsinternational.org/events/2025-wts-nc-triangle-go-gala>
- Build Accessibility into the Transportation Network, May 14, 2025, 5-8pm, Muller Engineering, 7245 West Alaska Dr., Suite 300, Lakewood, CO 80226. More information is available at this link: [Building Accessibility into the Transportation Network | WTS](#)
- Tails & Trails: A Mother's Day Story Walk, May 17, 2025, 9:30am-noon, Playground at Baldwin Park, 2000 S. Lakemont Ave, Winter Park, FL 32792. More information is available at this link: [Tales & Trails: A Mother's Day Story Walk | WTS](#)
- COMTO 14th Annual Celebrating Women Who Move the Nation Awards Breakfast, May 21, 2025, 8-10am, Smithsonian American Art Museum & National Portrait Gallery, 8th Street NW and G Street NW, Washington, DC, 20001. More information is available at this link: <https://comto.org/programs-events/celebrating-women-who-move-nation>
- Women in Motion: Prioritizing Transportation Equity Around the Puget Sound, May 22, 2025, 5-7pm, a/stir, 818 E. Pike St, Seattle, WA 98122. More information is available at this link: [Women in Motion: Prioritizing Transportation Equity Around the Puget Sound | WTS](#)
- Psychological Safety, June 12, 2025, 8:30-10:30am, PA Turnpike Commission, 700 S. Eisenhower Blvd, Middletown, PA 17057. More information is available at this link: [Psychological Safety | WTS](#)
- 54th Annual COMTO National Meeting and Training Conference, July 12-15, 2025, Marriott Marquis – New York, 1535 Broadway, New York, NY, 10036. More information is available at this link: <https://members.comtonational.org/page/2025-conference-home>

Continue to be a DEIB Advocate for Women!