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# Celebrating & Recognizing National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day at the University of Toronto

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Human Resources and Equity, University of Toronto

In 2009, following the passing of a unanimous motion the House of Commons, the month of June was declared National Indigenous History Month, while continuing to celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day (since 1996) on June 21. The Division of Human Resources and Equity joins the University community in honouring the history, recognizing the present and celebrating the contributions and experiences of Indigenous Peoples.

During National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day, we honour, acknowledge and celebrate the diverse Nations and unique cultures of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. We honour the people who have called this land home since time immemorial and continue to reflect on our connections with Indigenous peoples and work together towards reconciliation.

National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day are a reminder for all of us to reflect on our ongoing roles and responsibilities in the path towards truth and reconciliation and its intersections with our own practices. Reconciliation affects us all and we must work together. The truth needs to be heard and acknowledged to facilitate an active participation in decolonization.
This commitment is especially relevant in the current COVID-19 crisis. Indigenous communities are particularly vulnerable to the disease due to geographical distances, access to necessary resources, and underlying health conditions. We all share the responsibility to recognize these unique circumstances and to challenge systemic oppression – by speaking up, learning how to become an ally, or by just listening. For many, this includes a recognition of how our ancestors, as settlers, have contributed to colonial legacies through our silences and actions.

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