

Email Subject: Please join us in celebrating Hispanic American Heritage Month!



Southcoast Colleagues,

My name is Melanie Cluley and I am the new Director of Organizational Culture and Engagement here at Southcoast Health. I am so excited to be a part of this organization and am grateful to be in a role that allows me to focus on initiatives supporting an increased sense of belonging. From my short time here, I can tell Southcoast is off to an amazing start having established a strong DE&I council and numerous Employee Resource Groups in the past few years. I can't wait to continue this incredible work with you!

As a first-generation Puerto Rican, I am delighted to kick off our annual celebration of Hispanic American Heritage Month. This recognition month started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period.

This is an important time to recognize and celebrate the many contributions, cultures, and histories of the Latine community. This month also celebrates the independence days of several Latin American countries, including: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua on September 15th, Mexico on September 16th, and Chile on September 18th.

The Southcoast community is already committed to work that benefits the Hispanic community in so many ways; from creating and showcasing bilingual materials that are seen around the hospital, to the future addition of K'iche interpreters, and the important community-based work that our diabetes outreach team is doing.

As part of our celebration this month we will be highlighting a few of our colleague's stories about their heritage and unique perspectives of the Hispanic American experience. Please watch for them on social media and in the Southcoast Weekly. Additionally, I hope everyone stops by the cafeteria to try the various food offerings that represent several Latine cultures and order foods from the Puerto Rican food truck that will be visiting. Sharing a meal and trying new foods is a great way to learn about traditions and cultures!

Moving into the fall, we also have our second DE&I Lunch and Learn on Thursday October 12, [From Columbus to Indigenous - Why the Movement for Change](#) in honor of Indigenous People's Day. I hope you will be able to join us and thank you for making the Intergenerational lunch and learn a success.

I look forward to celebrating the many cultures, identities, traditions, and experiences of the Southcoast community. Please send ideas for future awareness or recognition campaigns to cluleym@southcoast.org.

Thank you again for joining us in these events. Through this awareness, comes respect for each other, and ultimately a better experience as employees and the best patient care.

With Gratitude,

Melanie Cluley
Director of Organizational Culture and Engagement
Southcoast Health