Since 1968, the Department of Defense (DOD) has supported ethnic observances through the development of local programs and many diverse activities. The Department’s goal is to understand others’ perspectives, to broaden our own, and to fully experience and educate ourselves.

Cultural celebrations foster respect and open-mindedness for other cultures, and provide an opportunity where diverse perspectives, cultures and values are accepted, appreciated, and celebrated. Knowledge is the key to acceptance.

Celebrating our differences, as well as our common interests, helps unite and educate us. Activities are designed to enhance cross-cultural awareness and promote harmony among all military members, their families, and the civilian work force. These activities are extensions of our equal opportunity, diversity and inclusion education, and training objectives.

The recognition of a common humanity is the first step in the celebration of our differences - differences that inform our cultures, our values, our minds, and all our ways of being in the world.

As the Nation’s largest employer, the DOD encourages all members to accept the responsibility to be actively involved in addressing the educational, economic, cultural, and societal needs of all Americans.

Through multicultural celebrations, not only do we become more aware of others’ culture, we gain a sense of pride for the diversity of our own culture.