



United States Department of the Interior
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS
Washington, DC 20240

Subject: National Caribbean-American Heritage Month (NCAHM)

NATIONAL CARIBBEAN AMERICAN

HERITAGE MONTH 2020 CELEBRATION



June is National Caribbean American Heritage Month (NCAHM), a celebration that recognizes the significance of Caribbean people and their descendants in United States history and culture. Since NCAHM was first declared in 2006, the White House has issued an annual proclamation recognizing June as Caribbean-American Heritage Month. As the President stated in his 2020 proclamation, “This month, we recognize the vibrant culture and patriotism of Caribbean Americans that continue to bolster our country and enrich our lives.” Past Presidential Proclamations have recognized Caribbean Americans such as Alexander Hamilton, who was born in the British West Indies on the Caribbean island of Nevis. Hamilton played a key role in defending and ratifying the U.S. Constitution and became the first U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, helping to establish the foundation for our modern financial system and creating the U.S. Coast Guard.

Although NCAHM is traditionally celebrated in the month of June, the Department of the Interior (DOI or Interior) observes NCAHM in July to ensure its full recognition.

NCAHM is a time to celebrate the cultural traditions, ancestry, and vibrant culture and patriotism of Caribbean Americans in shaping the American dream. This year's NCAHM theme, "Our Shared History, Our Shared Future," is a reminder of the citizens whose indelible legacies of ingenuity, perseverance, and outstanding achievements have influenced the history of the United States as we know it today. Caribbean Americans of note include former Secretary of State Colin Powell; James Weldon Johnson, who composed the lyrics of the Black National Anthem; Celia Cruz, the world-renowned "Queen of Salsa" music; and Shirley Chisholm, the first African American Congresswoman and first African American woman candidate for President.

During NCAHM, all DOI employees are encouraged to capitalize on the opportunity to learn from the inspirational stories of the Caribbean people and the strong cultural ties that add to the vitality, success, and prosperity of the United States. Numerous educational lectures, workshops, and other festivities are available online and provide an opportunity to gain an appreciation and understanding of the vast experiences and cultures needed to further the DOI mission. More information on the Caribbean American culture and history is found at the [National Archives Caribbean American Heritage](#) and [National Caribbean American Month](#).

The Office of the Secretary, Office of Civil Rights (OCR), in partnership with the National Park Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs will host a NCAHM virtual event on July 22, 2020, at 1:00 pm EST. The event will showcase the Founder and President of the Institute of Caribbean Studies, Claire Nelson, Ph.D. All are encouraged to participate. Closed captioning and sign language interpreting is provided, for additional reasonable accommodations, contact Kimberly Ly, within the OCR at kimberly_ly@ios.doi.gov.