

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

SEPTEMBER 15 - OCTOBER 15



JUSTICE SONIA SOTOMAYOR

Sonia Sotomayor (b. 1954) A Bronx native of Puerto Rican descent, Sonia Sotomayor became the first Hispanic American to serve as a member of the Supreme Court. Justice Sotomayor knew as a young child that she wanted to become an attorney, so she studied and earned a full scholarship to attend Princeton University on a full scholarship. While there, she established herself as a student advocate, working hard to ensure Princeton began hiring Latin American faculty. After graduating Princeton in 1976, Justice Sotomayor went to Yale Law School, graduating in 1979, and got accepted to the New York Bar the following year. Justice Sotomayor had a prolific career practicing law in New York State and served on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit for eleven years. She then made history in 2009 when President Obama appointed her as his first nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court.

HISTORY OF HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

The history of Hispanic Heritage Month dates back to 1968, when it was first introduced as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon B. Johnson. It was later expanded to Hispanic Heritage Month in 1988 by President Ronald Reagan. Though the duration may have changed, it is important to note that both Hispanic Heritage Week and Month have always begun on September 15. The dates in which Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated are of great significance, as many Spanish speaking Latin American countries have independence days that fall within this time frame.

Five Spanish speaking Latin American countries alone celebrate their independence on September 15: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Meanwhile, Mexico celebrates its independence the following day, on September 16, and Chile's independence day is just two days after that, on September 18. The heritage month ends on October 15 since it is common to find festivities honoring indigenous heritage/culture on or around Columbus Day throughout much of Latin America.

(Excerpt from <https://hispanicheritagemonth.gov/about/>. Biography information from <https://www.biography.com/law-figure/sonia-sotomayor>.)



VANDERBILT
UNIVERSITY

**FOR MORE ON THE HERITAGE CALENDAR
COLLABORATION WITH THE OFFICE FOR
EDI AND UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY
COUNCIL, VISIT:**

