



## National Hispanic Heritage Month, 1989

*By the President of the United States of America*

### A Proclamation

Ever since Hispanic explorers discovered the vast, uncharted territory of the New World nearly half a millenium ago, men and women of Spanish and Latin American descent have made major contributions to the development of our country. America's oldest city, St. Augustine, Florida, was founded by Spanish peoples more than 25 years before the settlement of Jamestown. Many of our Nation's oldest churches, which continue to enrich the spiritual life of our Nation, were founded by Hispanic pioneers. These enterprising individuals shaped the character of the entire American Southwest, applying their strength and skill to ranching and mining, and building vibrant communities on once-barren tracts of land. However, the influence of Hispanic Americans has not been confined to the Southwest.

Nurtured by their rich ethnic heritage and inspired by their faith in the principles upon which this country was founded, Hispanic Americans have continued to make their mark across the country and in virtually every aspect of American life. During World War II, Hispanic Americans revealed the depth of their patriotism and love of liberty, serving with distinction from the Bataan Peninsula to North Africa. Men such as Private Silvestre Herrera of Arizona, who fought courageously against German forces in France, and Lieutenant Colonel Jose Holguin of California, who proved to be an outstanding navigator among U.S. bomber forces in the Pacific, were not alone in their heroic efforts during the war. A number of Hispanic American servicemen were among those who earned the Congressional Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, as well as the Silver Star and the Bronze Star.

Today, Hispanic Americans are leaders in government, business, education, sports, science, and the arts. Hispanic artists have made notable achievements in both classical and popular music; and the works of talented Hispanic sculptors and painters—such as Luis Jiminez, Edward Chavez, and Juan Gomez-Quiroz—grace many of our Nation's art galleries. Hispanic Americans occupy positions of leadership throughout our system of government, serving as councilmen, mayors, governors, and as members of State legislatures, the Congress, and the Cabinet.

Not all of the contributions made by Hispanic Americans to our society are so visible or so widely celebrated, however. Hispanic Americans have enriched our Nation beyond measure with the quiet strength of closely knit families and proud communities. Many have come to the United States in search of the freedom and opportunity denied to them by Marxist-Leninist regimes in their ancestral homelands. Industrious and determined, they have not only reaped the rewards of freedom, but also shared with their children a profound understanding of the rights and responsibilities we have as citizens of a free Nation. Their faith in the promise of America has been exceeded only by their faith in God.

The rich ethnic heritage of Hispanic Americans gives us cause to celebrate because it is a proud and colorful portion of our Nation's heritage. Hispanic Americans have reaffirmed our belief in the principles of liberty and democratic government, and they have helped to share that vision with our neighbors in Central and South America and the Caribbean. This month, as we recognize the many achievements of Hispanic Americans, we also recall the universal appeal of the American ideal of freedom and opportunity for all.

In recognition of the outstanding achievements of Hispanic Americans, the Congress, by Joint Resolution approved September 17, 1968 (Public Law 90-498), as amended, has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating the month beginning September 15 and ending October 15 as "National Hispanic Heritage Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month beginning September 15, 1989, and ending October 15, 1989, as National Hispanic Heritage Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies and activities, and I urge them to reaffirm their devotion to the principles of freedom and individual dignity—the common heritage of all Americans.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

*George Bush*