



## Office of American Spaces

BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS



### Resources for American Spaces

October 3, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

This month we continue to celebrate [National Hispanic Heritage Month](#) through October 15, and we mark [International Religious Freedom Day](#) on October 27. We are also looking ahead to events in November, to include:

- National Entrepreneurship Month,
- Native American Heritage Month, and
- International Education Week (Nov 14-18)

In this newsletter, we feature toolkits on Global Education Week and Native American Heritage to help you plan and prepare programming ideas. We will share resources for International Education Week in our next newsletter. In the meantime, check out the latest information on the [EducationUSA website](#), including this [new video](#) on the diversity of the U.S. higher education system.

### In Memory of Afshan Amir, American Spaces Pakistan Country Director



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the unexpected passing of our **American Spaces Pakistan Country Director, Ms. Afshan Amir**. Afshan worked with the Lincoln Learning Centers in Pakistan for nearly 23 years. Afshan will be remembered for her hard work and ingenuity, and her dedication to empowering women and girls across Pakistan. Over her career, Afshan worked with many American officers and American Spaces teams, and her contributions are immeasurable. Afshan was instrumental in helping to open a new American Space in Gilgit, Pakistan this year. Her dedication to the mission of American Spaces and to building mutual understanding between the peoples of Pakistan and the United States survives her through the programs and places she created.

We would like to share a few heartfelt words from REPS who served with Afshan in Islamabad in recent years:

*"My first overseas assignment as a Foreign Service Officer was in Pakistan, where I had the pleasure and great honor of working with the amazing Afshan Amir. She was my mentor and guide to Pakistan, Islam, U.S.-Pakistan relations, and so much more. Afshan led a team of colleagues within the embassy and across the consulates, as well as the team of Lincoln Corner Coordinators across the country. She gained the respect of others through her honesty, resourcefulness, and determination to do the right thing. Together, we opened the American Center in the new embassy compound, created the Lincoln Corners Pakistani logo and tagline, brought Lincoln Corner Coordinators to the U.S., and renovated or opened numerous Lincoln Corners across the country. Afshan was a force! She was a mentor and inspiration to so many – directly and indirectly. She embodied the tagline 'Connecting Pakistanis to America' and created bridges of greater understanding, respect, and tolerance. Her impact is lasting. Afshan, you will be dearly missed but never forgotten."*

-- Marcy Carrel, REPS Islamabad (2014-2016)

*"Who better to spend the pandemic with than the creative, resourceful, indefatigable Ms. Afshan Amir? I had the great fortune of working with Afshan in Islamabad from 2020-2021, and despite pandemic restrictions and virtual meetings and programs from morning till night, we managed to do rewarding, impactful work together. And I attribute that all to Afshan, a visionary leader who keenly saw the opportunity in every challenge and who was unafraid to speak openly and honestly, even when doing so, in certain situations, was far from easy. Not only did Afshan's 23 years of work at the U.S. Embassy Pakistan positively influence generations of young people by giving them access to information and connections through American Spaces, but I know, for certain, that she had an equal, if not greater, impact on her Pakistani and American colleagues. The word I see repeated about Afshan, at this moment when we are all remembering her, is that of mentor. Thank you, Afshan, for lighting the path for so many of us."*

-- Sarah Ziebell, REPS Islamabad (2020-2021)

If you would like to share a photo, memory, or tribute to Afshan, please send a message to SCA Field Support Officer Desiree Williamson at [WilliamsonDL@state.gov](mailto:WilliamsonDL@state.gov) by Wednesday, October 5 COB. Your message will not be shared publicly, but we will ensure any notes received by that date are included in a keepsake we are creating for her family.

### Upcoming Program Themes

#### GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK

RESOURCE TOOLKIT FOR AMERICAN SPACES

This toolkit provides resources for programming during Global Entrepreneurship Week held each year in November. The information and resources in it are from the Global Entrepreneurship Network's website, as well as from the website of the Office of American Spaces.



November is the month to **promote entrepreneurship** in your American Spaces! Consider hosting a business start-up workshop during [Global Entrepreneurship Week](#) (GEW, Nov 14-20), or plan a women-focused training initiative on [Women's Entrepreneurship Day](#) (Nov 19). Take a look at the [GEW toolkit](#), and our [business and entrepreneurship collection](#) in the American Spaces eShop as well. We have even more resources on our programming website in the ["economic prosperity and entrepreneurship" resources section](#).

#### NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE MONTH

Resources Toolkit for American Spaces

National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month is celebrated every November to recognize the diverse cultures and to educate the public about the heritage, history, art, and traditions of the American Indian and Alaska Native people.



In 1990, U.S. President George H. W. Bush signed into law a joint resolution designating the month of November as the first **National American Indian Heritage Month (also known as Native American Heritage Month)**. "American Indians were the original inhabitants of the lands that now constitute the United States of America," noted the Congressional resolution. "Native American Indians have made an essential and unique contribution to our Nation" and "to the world."

In honor of these contributions, we encourage American Spaces to conduct programming that shares the importance of Native American history and which showcases the rich and varied diversity of the tribal nations in the United States. This [resource toolkit](#) includes a variety of programming materials, and the American Spaces eShop also has a [collection](#) of educational books and media.

### Welcome to our Newest American Spaces!



#### Czech Republic (Czechia): New American Space Opens at Olomouc's Palacky University

Public broadcaster Czech TV and several regional outlets reported on the September 20 opening of a **brand new American Space at Palacky University in Olomouc**, a city in the eastern province of Moravia. The media highlighted the Space's importance for the university's students, as well as the general public, by offering discussions and cultural programs, English language education support, and information on study in the United States.

Charge d'Affaires Christy Agora said: "We are thrilled to open an American Space in Olomouc, the city of such rich cultural, historic, and academic heritage. The Corner will serve as a window to America, and a platform for dialogue and the exchange of views between Americans and the Czech people. Our American Spaces are permanent and physical reminders of the strong U.S.-Czech friendship, and our joint commitment to shared values, such as freedom, democracy, human rights and support for Ukraine against continued Russian aggression."

Palacky University is the third largest university in the Czech Republic, and the new American Space is situated on a main thoroughfare just 100 meters from the city's main square. Vienna REPS Laura Kaspar-Hohmann attended the opening for the Office of American Spaces.



#### Spain: Grand Opening of American Space Quixote (ASQ) in Cuenca, Castilla de la Mancha

The brand new American Space Quixote opened in Cuenca, Spain on September 28, located approximately 100 miles (160 kms) outside Madrid in the region of Castilla de la Mancha. The space will be a place where young people from Castilla-La Mancha can study English, learn about innovation and technology, and experience U.S. culture.

The U.S. Embassy and FabLab Cuenca collaborated to open ASQ, which (among other features) will have a digital fabrication laboratory on wheels, an adapted vehicle that will bring American Space activities to all corners of Castilla-La Mancha.

During the opening, the Deputy Chief of Mission Conrad Tribble stated he is confident "this space can inspire, open their horizons and offer new opportunities" to young people from small towns and rural areas of Castilla-La Mancha.

With the ASQ opened, there are now three American Spaces in Spain. American Space Quixote joins American Space Valencia, inaugurated in 2013 at the Polytechnic University of Valencia, and American Space Barcelona, located in the Ignasi Iglesias-Can Fabra Library, which has been operating since 2016.



#### Sri Lanka: The American Center in Colombo relocates to the new U.S. Embassy building

At a colorful opening ceremony on October 3, the new and revamped American Center in Colombo hosted library patrons, Youth Forum members, and past and present program participants, as well as program implementing partners. With an eye on providing Sri Lankan youth the tools they need to seize the future, the new American Center in Colombo shifted primary focus from being a library and program venue to a space for collaborative learning and digital engagement, as well as a state-of-the-art location for technology such as virtual reality and 3D printing.

The American Center will continue to host programs such as English language training, public speaking, entrepreneurship development, coding, web development, media literacy, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) and, much more. It will also continue to offer a space for Sri Lanka's youth, university students, and friends of the United States where information is accessible, freedom of expression is celebrated, and the freedom to assemble is supported.

U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka Julie Chung joined the celebration and engaged with the patrons of the American Center, remarking, "After three years of mostly virtual programming, my team and I are grateful to be able to continue the tradition of freedom of expression and exchange in this beautiful, modern space. I hope that over the coming weeks, months, and years we'll see new and old friends coming together in this space to co-create dreams, programs, and fulfilling futures."

### We are also delighted to announce the opening of America House Lviv in Ukraine, which opened its doors on October 3 -- stay tuned for more information and photos in the next newsletter!

We appreciate all the submissions that highlight your great programs! To be showcased in this newsletter, email us at [AmericanSpaces@state.gov](mailto:AmericanSpaces@state.gov) with a brief description of your program, the audience reached, and a photo or link.

### Calendar of Events

Please feel free to access these resources now to help you plan ahead for the coming month!

Note a few highlighted date corrections in the programming calendar outlined below. All new additions or edits are marked in red text.

Here's a link to the 2022 American Spaces Calendar of Holidays and Observances.

October: Cybersecurity Month - See [toolkit](#)

October: International Disability Employment Awareness Month - [toolkit](#)

October 4: Child Health Day - See [CDC Guidelines](#)

October 4-10: World Space Week - See [Space Exploration toolkit](#)

October 11: International Day of the Girl - See [official site](#) and [resources on women's empowerment](#)

October 12: Columbus Day (United States Federal holiday also known as Indigenous Peoples' Day)

October 16: World Food Day - See [official site](#)

October 17: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty - See [official site](#)

October 24: United Nations Day - See [official site](#)

October 27: International Religious Freedom Day - See [toolkit](#)

October 29: International Internet Day - See [official site](#)

November: National Entrepreneurship Month - See [resources](#)

November: American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month - See [toolkit](#)

November 6: International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict - See [official site](#)

November 9: World Freedom Day - See [resources](#)

November 11: Veterans Day - See [resources](#)

November 14-20: Global Entrepreneurship Week - See [related site](#) and [resources](#) (please note the dates on the planning calendar link are marked incorrectly)

November 14-18: International Education Week - See [related site](#) and [resources](#)

November 16: International Day for Tolerance - See [related site](#) and [resources](#)

November 19: Women's Entrepreneurship Day - See [resources](#)

November 20: World Children's Day - See [related site](#) (please note the date on the planning calendar link is marked incorrectly)

November 24: Thanksgiving Day - See [resources](#)

November 25 - December 10: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence - See [resources](#)

December 1: World AIDS Day - see [related resources](#)

December 2: International Day of the Abolition of Slavery - See [official site](#)

December 3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities - See [toolkit](#)

December 5-11: Computer Science Education Week - See [related site](#)

December 9: International Anti-Corruption Day - see [toolkit](#)

December 10: International Human Rights Day - See [resources](#)

December 18: International Migrants Day - See [official site](#)

December 20: International Human Solidarity Day - See [official site](#)

Thanks to all of you who have shared your programming ideas and highlights with your colleagues through our American Spaces FB page. You can continue to share your news and information by emailing us at [AmericanSpaces@state.gov](mailto:AmericanSpaces@state.gov). If you have any questions or content to add, email Myles Marken at [markenn@state.gov](mailto:markenn@state.gov).

To add someone to this newsletter, email us at [AmericanSpaces@state.gov](mailto:AmericanSpaces@state.gov).

Want to learn about more events in your area or causes you care about? Tell us about yourself and your interests [here](#).

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