German-American Heritage Month

In the month of October Americans (and some Canadians) commemorate the Germanic heritage element of American (and Canadian) society. About one in four Americans claims to have German ancestors. German-Americans from Adolph Coors to Albert Einstein have made important contributions to both American and world culture. The legendary Brooklyn Bridge was designed by a German-born engineer. The American rockets to the moon were designed and supervised by another German-American. There were Germans among the Jamestown settlers in 1607 and Germans (Prussians, Austrians, etc.) have continued to migrate to the New World until the present day--most notably during the two migratory waves of the late 1840s and from 1880 to 1889.

Here’s an excerpt from President Ronald Reagan’s 1987 German-American Day proclamation: “The United States has embraced a vast array of German traditions, institutions, and influences. Many of these have become so accepted as parts of our way of life that their ethnic origin has been obscured. For instance, Christmas trees and Broadway musicals are familiar features of American society. Our kindergartens, graduate schools, the social security system, and labor unions are all based on models derived from Germany.

German teachers, musicians, and enthusiastic amateurs have left an indelible imprint on classical music, hymns, choral singing, and marching bands in our country. In architecture and design, German contributions include the modern suspension bridge, Bauhaus, and Jugendstil. German-American scientists have helped make the United States the world’s pioneer in research and technology. The American work ethic, a major factor in the rapid rise of the United States to preeminence in agriculture and industry, owes much to German-Americans’ commitment to excellence.”

President Reagan’s 1987 proclamation went on to point out that the German-American connection has not been only a one-way exchange: “For more than three centuries, Germans have helped build, invigorate, and strengthen this country. But the United States has given as well as received. Just a generation ago, America conceived of and swiftly implemented the Marshall Plan, which helped the new German democracy rise from the rubble of war to become a beacon of democracy in Central Europe.”

German-American Day in the US is not the only German-related day in October. Below is a calendar of other October observances.

Special Days in October

Day of German Unity (Tag der Deutschen Einheit) - October 3
This official German holiday commemorates Germany’s reunification in 1990, when East and West Germany once again became one country known as die Bundesrepublik Deutschland (the Federal Republic of Germany). The date reflects the signing of the reunification treaty rather than the actual date of the 1989 opening of the Berlin Wall.

German-American Day - October 6
The first German-American Day was proclaimed by President Ronald Reagan in 1983 for the 300th anniversary of the arrival of 13 German families on board a sailing vessel named “Concord” (the “German Mayflower”). The Germans from Krefeld landed in Philadelphia on October 6, 1683 and founded Germantown, Pennsylvania (now part of Philadelphia). In 1987, after a campaign by German-American organizations, Congress made October 6 an official day of commemoration and President Reagan signed the proclamation.

German Pioneers Day (Ontario, Canada) - Day after Canadian Thanksgiving (October)
A law passed by the Ontario provincial Legislative Assembly in 2000 proclaimed the annual celebration of the German contributions to Canada on the day after Canadian Thanksgiving (the second Monday in October). The celebration, held in connection with Kitchener’s annual Oktoberfest, actually includes Austrian and other Germanic ethnic groups.

October 2014 Calendar

1-7 - Universal Children's Week (US)
3-5 - Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend
4 - Dussehra (Hindu)
5-11 - Emergency Nurses Week (US)
9-15 - Sukkot (Jewish)
10 - World Homeless Day
12 - Spanish Language Day (US)
12-18 - National Food Bank Week
15 - Al-Hijira (Islamic New Year)
17-24 - Food & Drug Interactions and Awareness Week (US)
19-25 - Pastoral Care Week (US)
20 - Birth of the Bab (Baha’i)
23 - Diwali (Hindu, Jain)
23-31 - Prescription Errors Education & Awareness Week (US)
31 - Halloween or All Hallows Eve (Christian)
New Interpreter Profile: Vivian Yee

Vivian joined Medical Interpreting Services department in August of this year as the Cantonese / Mandarin / Toisanese interpreter. Vivian was born and raised in China. She enjoys school & learning, and has been successful in all of her studies. Vivian has a passion for helping others, and for this reason she chose a career path in the medical field. Vivian’s biggest accomplishment was graduating with a medical degree and becoming a doctor in China.

During her spare time Vivian enjoys gardening, cooking, and spending time with her family. She has a small garden in her backyard and grows her own vegetables to use for cooking. Her family believes in the benefits of organic gardening.

We asked Vivian what her thoughts are about joining the MIS department. In her own words, “I really enjoy working in the MIS department. It gives me a chance to help patients and utilize my medical background. The people I work with are great and have been very helpful. I feel very welcomed and think this is a great opportunity for me as I begin my career at the UC Davis Medical Center.”

Welcome onboard Vivian! You are a great asset to our patients and providers!

New Interpreter Profile: Sandy Hulse

Sandy is our newest addition to the MIS Spanish team. She was born and raised in a small town called Sutter Creek. She started studying Spanish when she was 20 years old and went to Guadalajara to study abroad. Sandy considers her biggest accomplishments to be learning Spanish, living in another country without knowing anyone there, and receiving her Bachelor’s degree in Spanish studies with a minor in Cultural Anthropology from CSU, Sacramento. Sandy took the initiative to invest in her career & completed Bridging the Gap Medical Interpreting Training program in Seattle, WA.

In her spare time Sandy likes to go to the gym, try out new restaurants, watch football, get together with friends, and learn new terms (expand her vocabulary). She owns a French Bulldog named Jolie.

We asked Sandy her thoughts about joining the Medical Interpreting Services team. Sandy said, “I am extremely honored and thrilled to work with such a talented and professional staff. Helping patients and getting to know the UC staff has been a blessing to me. I admire the work ethic of all of our interpreters and am proud to learn side by side with them while we perfect our craft”.

Welcome onboard, Sandy! You are a great asset to our patients and providers!

2014 International Interpreter Day

On September 30th Medical Interpreting Services department held its annual celebration of the International Interpreter Day.

Interpreters and translators are honored every year on this day - the feast of St. Jerome, the Bible translator who is considered to be the patron saint of translators. The celebrations have been promoted by IFT (the International Federation of Translators) ever since the professional holiday was set up in 1953. In 1991 IFT launched the idea of an officially recognized International Translation Day to show solidarity of the worldwide translation community in an effort to promote the profession in different countries.

This day is an opportunity to display pride in a profession that is becoming increasingly essential in the era of progressing globalization. Medical Interpreting Services promotes the health system’s goal to provide person- and family-centered care. We also support the health system’s goal of the strategic use of technology. Notably, UC Davis Medical Center is the first medical facility in the Sacramento region to use video technology to provide language services to our patients and their families. It speaks volumes to the visionary leadership of the medical center that today MIS department is the regional and state leader in meeting patients’ language access needs.