

ARWG November Diversity Message

This month's Diversity message is brought to you by Capt Robert Melgosa.

Happy November to all our great members of the Arkansas Wing, for my family it is the beginning of the holiday season and an entire day of moving decoration bins around for my family. Before we discuss the DEI for November here is a short intro about me.

I am Capt. Robert M. Melgosa, a proud member of the 115th Composite Squadron in Rogers, AR. I am a Veteran of the USAF, having spent ten years on Active Duty with assignments all over the world. I am also a former Civil Air Patrol cadet from the Texas Wing, Lackland Cadet Squadron TX007, I was a C/LtCol and enjoyed my time as a cadet being involved in multiple encampments, multiple NCSAs, CAC and IACE.

November has a few significant observances, and I would like to focus on a couple, starting with National Veterans and Military Families Month. This has special meaning to me, having served for a decade in the U. S. Air Force on Active duty. I was a member of the Security Forces and later a Combat Arms Instructor. I served at four different stateside bases, including overseas, and deployed to southwest Asia. I still serve and work with Veterans as an employee with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Often overlooked are the families of Veterans. My wife Courtney for example is a Veteran as well and, like me, works at the VA. During the many times I was Temporary Duty Assignment (TDY) or deployed, sometimes for over six months at a time, my wife was at home with my oldest son taking care of him and working at the same time. We have all seen the reunion videos of military parents and their children, so we know how it affects the children of Veterans.

I would also like to discuss **Movember** to raise awareness of men's health issues, such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and men's suicide. I first encountered the idea of Movember when I was serving in the Air Force, and it became a thing in November to not shave your mustache during the month of November or "No Shave November."

It was a small way to acknowledge and shine a light on what is now globally sixty men who commit suicide every hour. Mental health in men is often seen as a weakness in men by both themselves and others including their partners, so it is frequently hidden or overlooked. An example is how people react to men crying or showing emotion in online videos; many commenters will mock or degrade the men in the videos.

On the physical side, Prostate and Testicular cancer are often overlooked or disregarded for similar reasons as mental health. Men sometimes avoid medical treatment to avoid losing time at work or with friends and family.

Native American Heritage Month

November is Native American Heritage Month, where the voices of the oppressed and marginalized Indigenous people are heard all month long and hopefully all year long too. Take some time this month to learn about the traditions and cultures, including the music and dance of local tribes in your area.

<https://www.nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov/>

National Veterans and Military Families Month

November is also National Veterans and Military Families Month, where we show appreciation to all those serving in our military and veterans who have served. Give our service members and all veterans the appreciation they deserve for the sacrifices they and their families make for our freedoms.

[National Veterans and Military Families Month Fact Sheet | Military OneSource](#)

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/products/national-veterans-and-military-families-month-fact-sheet-364/>

Movember

Movember is an annual campaign that takes place in November to raise awareness for men's health issues, particularly prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and mental health. During this month, men are encouraged to grow mustaches to spark conversations about these important topics and raise funds for research and support programs.

<https://us.movember.com/>

DEI November Dates

November 1 – All Saint's Day (Roman Catholic)

November 1-2 – Dia de los Muertos

November 11 – Veterans Day

November 12 – Diwali (Hindu)

November 13 – 19 – Transgender Awareness Week

November 16 – International Day for Tolerance

November 19 – International Men's Day

November 20 - Transgender Day of Remembrance

November 23 – Thanksgiving Day

November 27 – Guru Nanak Gurburab (Sikh)

Capt Robert Melgosa

ARWG Diversity Equity & Inclusion Team