

# DIVERSITY in DUBUQUE

**April 2025**

A newsletter from the City of Dubuque's Office of Equity & Human Rights

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## Holidays & Observances

**April 12**

Passover

**April 12**

Hanuman Jayanti

**April 14**

Baisakhi

**April 16**

Emancipation Day

**April 18**

World Heritage Day

**April 20**

Easter Sunday

**April 23**

Yom HaShoah

**April 29**

Yom HaZikaron

## Arab American Heritage Month

Arab American Heritage month is a time to recognize the invaluable contributions of Arab Americans. It also serves as a time to recognize and challenge stereotypes and prejudices that some people have towards Arab Americans.

Arabs emigrated here from times before the United States even existed. Some historians trace them back to as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Their reasons for emigrating here over the centuries mirror those of every other nationality: war, political strife, religious freedom, and most of all, to create a better life for themselves and their children.

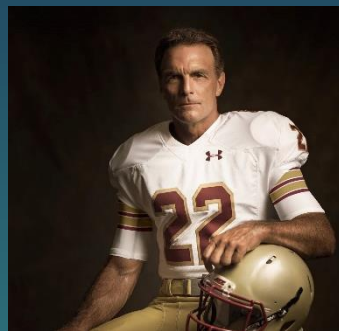
Like many nationalities, Arab American's have faced prejudices in this country. Much of this prejudice is based on misinformation and historical mistrust. Like most religions at different points throughout history, Islam has seen its fair share of prejudice and misunderstanding. Ironically though, many people don't realize that not everyone from the Middle East is Muslim. While Islam is the primary religion in that region, there are many other religions as well including Judaism and Christianity.

Prejudice against Arab Americans reached a peak after 9/11 when 19 Middle Easterners flew airplanes into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania.

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**Vince Vaughn**  
Actor



**Doug Flutie**  
Athlete



**Hoda Kotb**  
Journalist

# Arab American Heritage Month & Autism Awareness Month

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After this tragedy, many Americans blamed all Arabs for the event even though it was perpetrated only by a small group of extremists. Soon after 9/11, many Americans associated Arab Americans with violence, fanaticism, war, and terrorism. While tensions have eased over the years, fear and prejudice still remains.

Arab Americans have contributed to all aspects of American politics, science, sports, culture, and society. Famous Arab American's include actor Vince Vaughn, musician Frank Zappa, the founder of St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital Danny Thomas, journalist Hoda Kotb, and quarterback Doug Flutie. Arab American Dr. Michael DeBakey developed the artificial heart. Ahmed Zewail won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. And Anthony Fadell was a key inventor of the iPod.

Arab American's rich heritage, resilience, and commitment to their communities continue to shape the nation in meaningful ways. As understanding and appreciation of Arab American experiences grow, it is essential to recognize and applaud their role in in American society.

## Autism Awareness Month

Autism is a complex neurological condition that affects how people interact with others. People with autism can have very different experiences from others with autism. The way they think, feel, react, and

communicate can vary. Autistic persons may find socializing confusing or tiring at times. It can be overwhelming for them as can loud or crowded spaces. But this isn't the case for all autistic people.

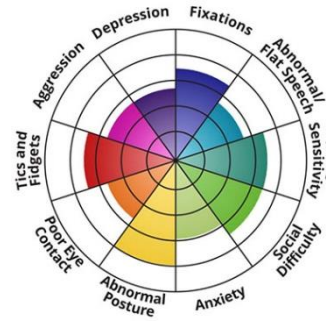
Autism is on a spectrum. Historically, this spectrum was thought of as a straight line between severity of symptoms.

However, new understandings of autism show that diagnosing this disorder is more of a wheel with varying degrees of symptoms.

Autism is both a shared and very personal journey. 1 in 36 children are born with this developmental disability. However, many people with autism have found great success despite their diagnosis. Some individuals with autism include Albert Einstein, Jerry Seinfeld, Charles Darwin, Bill Gates, Emily Dickinson, Lionel Messi, and both Beethoven and Mozart.

It is important to foster understanding, acceptance, and support for autistic individuals to help them thrive in society. By promoting awareness, advocating for inclusive environments, and providing appropriate resources, we can create a world that values neurodiversity and ensures that every person, regardless of their differences, has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

<https://behavioral-innovations.com/blog/20-famous-people-with-autism-spectrum-disorder-asd/>; [https://autismsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/AutismSociety\\_What-is-Autism-Infographic\\_Digital.pdf](https://autismsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/AutismSociety_What-is-Autism-Infographic_Digital.pdf); Autism Wheel: <https://ablelight.org/blog/why-the-autism-wheel-is-replacing-the-spectrum/>



**Lionel Messi**  
Athlete



**Jerry Seinfeld**  
Actor



**Emily Dickinson**  
Poet



**Bill Gates**  
Philanthropist

## A Note from the Office of Equity & Human Rights

In a world where opinions and views can be wildly different, the need for conversation and understanding is necessary more than ever. Avoiding such conversations can only lead to more divisiveness. However, handling them with calm compassion and empathy can lead to a better understanding of both sides of the issue.

When faced with an uncomfortable conversation, first try to remain calm. Don't let your frustration take over; it only serves to inflame an already tense conversation. Check your body language and take deep breaths to calm yourself physically. Your body doesn't know the difference between physical and perceived attacks.

A lot of strong emotions come from a place of fear. Fear of the government toppling over, fear that rights will be taken away, fear of the unknown, and fear of change. Acknowledge your fears and acknowledge that the strong opinions of others may be coming from a place of fear as well.

Assume positive intent without personal judgement. Most people are not looking for a fight, whether physical or verbal. Watch your language and don't throw verbal grenades like name calling, don't use condescending language, and avoid blanket statements such as "I always" or "you never."

Listen to learn, not to respond even if you don't agree with the points they are making. Understanding another's point of view and where it stems from is important for maintaining a calm conversation. Show the other person you understand even though you disagree with them. Everyone wants to be heard.

Disagreements are inevitable in our interactions with others. But that doesn't mean they need to escalate into verbal battles. Seek first to learn and understand.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/brave-talk/202101/11-tips-for-talking-to-someone-you-disagree-with>

## Cultural Events Happening in the Tri-States

**First Friday** is a free downtown monthly community arts event with open galleries, artists' studios, and live entertainment. Events are held on April 4.

**K Kriesel** – Stoned Art Studio & Gallery @ Noon – 8 PM

**Amber Carlin** – Outside the Lines @ 4:30 – 7:30 PM

**Bella Kids Exhibit** – The Stu @ 5 – 7 PM

**The Arboretum Artists** – Carnegie-Stout Public Library @ 5:30 – 7:30 PM

**Fatherless Print Posse & Pricilla Steele** – Voices Studios @ 5:30 PM

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### Carnegie-Stout Library Virtual Author Talks

Each month, a selection of authors discusses their books and expert topics. These events are virtual and live; however, recordings of the talks will be archived for later viewing. [Registration on the library website is required.](#)

**Wordsmith and Wonder with Jodi Picoult**

April 2 @ 6 – 7 PM



**The Stories, Science, and History of Trees Matthew Fleming**

April 8 @ 1 – 2 PM



**The Thrill of Writing Action, Adventure, and Suspense with Gregg Hurwitz**

April 26 @ 6 – 7 PM



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### Volunteer Opportunity of the Month

Volunteers are needed to help set up and help with food prep the day before the Adult Prom at the Fairgrounds on April 24. Volunteers are also needed on the day of the prom, April 25, to greet and to assist with the buffet. All proceeds will benefit the Multicultural Family Center. Times Vary. [volunteerdubq.com](http://volunteerdubq.com).



## Cultural Events Happening in the Tri-States

### Growing Sustainable Communities Conference

**April 1-2 @ times vary**

**Grand River Center**

Sessions feature presenters with a wide range of expertise, including representatives from federal, state, and local governments, along with business and academic leaders from across the country. (prices vary)

### Mackin-Mailander Lecture Series: Chrissy Bartels

**April 2 @ 6:30 PM**

**Clarke University Jansen Music Hall**

Chrissy Bartels presents "Crucial Conversations: Turning Pain Into Purpose and Setbacks into Success."

Bartels will share her powerful experiences as an actor, educator, filmmaker, and more.



### Climate Action Festival

**April 3 @ 4-6 PM**

**Loras College Alumni Campus Center**

The Climate Action Festival features short informational sessions on the relationship between human health and climate, communicating and understanding science information, and the intersection of climate change and spirituality, as well as celebrating nature through dance and arts and crafts.

### Latino Poetry Anthologies and Reading

**April 5 @ 2 – 4 PM**

**Carnegie Stout Library**

Join Oscar Mireles as he gives us a brief history of Latino anthologies and performs a poetry reading.



### Julien Dubuque International Film Festival

**April 21-27 (times vary)**

**Downtown Dubuque**

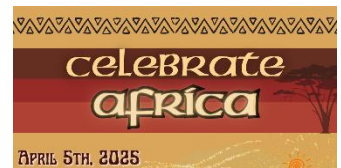
Independent films, including features, documentaries, and shorts, are screened in venues throughout downtown Dubuque. The event also features special panels with film professionals. (prices vary)

### Celebrate Africa

**April 5 @ 12 – 3 PM**

**Multicultural Family Center**

Join this annual celebration of all things African including dancing, African food, a fashion show, and African drumming.



### Myson's 2nd Annual Easter Egg Hunt

**April 19 @ 1 – 6 PM**

**Comiskey Park**

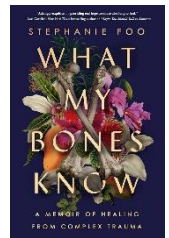
This free community event includes kid's activities, and also a job fair and resource booths for the adults. Enjoy free food and an appearance with the Easter Bunny.

### Adult Book Discussion – *What My Bones Know* by Stephanie Foo

**April 7 @ 6 – 7 PM**

**Carnegie Stout Library**

*What My Bones Know* is a moving memoir that explores personal themes of self-discovery, resilience, and self-expression as a means of healing and also the broader themes of trauma and silence in Asian American communities.



### In-Person Author Event: Stephanie Foo

**April 10 @ 6:30 – 7:30 PM**

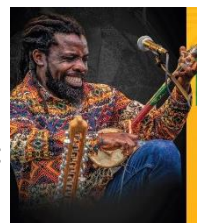
**Loras College Library**

### African Vibes

**April 27 @ 3 PM**

**Bluff Strokes Art Center**

This event merges the best of East Africa: regional snacks, captivating rhythms of Ugandan folk music, dance, storytelling, a drumming workshop, and live art painting by Dubuque artists in an unforgettable fusion of art, music, and community.



### Black History Reading Challenge:

**April 4, 1968: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Death**

**by Michael Eric Dyson**

**April 27 @ 3 – 4 PM**

**Carnegie Stout Public Library**

