

News Release

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Summit County Recognizes Minority Health Month, Autism Acceptance Month

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—On Monday, March 29, 2021, Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council passed resolutions declaring April as Minority Health Month and Autism Acceptance Month.

Established by Congress in 2002, Minority Health Month is now celebrated each April with the goal of recognizing the health inequalities facing minorities, and encouraging all health organizations to conduct appropriate programs and activities to promote healthfulness in minority and other health disparity communities.

The 2021 Minority Health Month theme is “Vaccine Ready”, which aims to draw attention to the disproportionate effect the COVID-19 pandemic is having on racial and ethnic minority and Native American communities, and highlight the need for these communities to be vaccinated as more vaccines become available.

“Health inequities have continued to persist in our nation, and the COVID-19 pandemic has exasperated existing disparities in minority communities,” said Executive Shapiro. “My office, Summit County Public Health and many community partners are working together to make sure our minority communities have equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, and we will continue to support efforts to rid our community of health inequities.”

Executive Shapiro and County Council also declared April Autism Acceptance Month in Summit County and recognized April 2 as Autism Awareness Day. The Autism Society of America, the nation’s oldest grassroots autism organization, designated “Celebrate Differences” as the 2021 theme. This theme encourages communities to be more aware of autism, promote acceptance, and be more inclusive in everyday life.

“Summit County is a welcoming, inclusive community for all people, and we recognize the strengths, talents and abilities of autistic individuals,” said Executive Shapiro. “We are committed to working with the Autism Society of Greater Akron and other organizations to break down all barriers for people with autism or any disability.”

In 2017, under Executive Shapiro’s leadership, Summit County was the first county in Ohio to be [declared](#) Autism Friendly.