

Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month

Information Resource Center, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy Jakarta

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This information package is compiled by the IRC to commemorate Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month May 2012

Obama on Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month 2012

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Generations of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) have helped make America what it is today. Their histories recall bitter hardships and proud accomplishments -- from the laborers who connected our coasts one-and-a-half centuries ago, to the patriots who fought overseas while their families were interned at home, from those who endured the harsh conditions of Angel Island, to the innovators and entrepreneurs who are driving our Nation's economic growth in Silicon Valley and beyond. Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month offers us an opportunity to celebrate the vast contributions Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have made to our Nation, reflect on the challenges still faced by AAPI communities, and recommit to making the American dream a reality for all.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders comprise many ethnicities and languages, and their myriad achievements embody the American experience. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have started businesses, including some of our Nation's most successful and dynamic enterprises. AAPI men and women are leaders in every aspect of American life -- in government and industry, science and medicine, the arts and our Armed Forces, education and sports.

Yet, while we celebrate these successes, we must remember that too often Asian American and Pacific Islanders face significant adversity. Many AAPI communities continue to fight prejudice and struggle to overcome disparities in education, employment, housing, and health care. My Administration remains committed to addressing these unique challenges. Through the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, we are working to expand opportunities for AAPI communities by improving access to Federal programs where Asian American and Pacific Islanders are currently underserved. To learn more about the Initiative, visit www.WhiteHouse.gov/AAPI.

As we also take this occasion to reflect on our past, we mark 70 years since the Executive Order that authorized the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. Last month, I announced my intent to posthumously award the Presidential Medal of Freedom -- the country's highest civilian honor -- to Gordon Hirabayashi, who openly defied this forced relocation, and bravely took his challenge all the way to the United States Supreme Court.

This year, we also commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first Japanese cherry blossom trees planted in Washington, D.C., an enduring symbol of the friendship shared between the United States and Japan and a reminder of America's standing as a Pacific nation. Over the centuries, we have maintained a long, rich history of

engagement in the Asia-Pacific region, and our AAPI communities have been essential to strengthening the economic, political, and social bonds we share with our partners around the world.

This month, we reflect on the indelible ways AAPI communities have shaped our national life. As we celebrate centuries of trial and triumph, let us rededicate ourselves to making our Nation a place that welcomes the contributions of all people, all colors, and all creeds, and ensures the American dream is within reach for all who seek it.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2012 as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. I call upon all Americans to visit www.AsianPacificHeritage.gov to learn more about the history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

Source: <http://goo.gl/ZmUVQ>

U.S. Embassy Jakarta Mission Statement

Based on mutual respect and shared values, the U.S. Mission works with Indonesia to strengthen democracy, sustain the environment, promote prosperity, enhance understanding and ensure security for our people, our nations, and our region.

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“Dream Big,” Advise Asian-American “Champions of Change”

By Jane Morse | IIP Digital Staff Writer | 09 April 2012

Washington — “You can do anything if you dream big,” advises Paul Kim, who was honored at the White House April 5 for winning a nationwide video contest called “What’s Your Story?”

Kim, the son of a Korean pastor, found when he was a child attending U.S. schools that his homemade lunches of kimchee and squid were unfamiliar to his American classmates. Kim soon developed a talent for making such cultural differences into comedy.

Kim was inspired by comedians such as Johnny Carson and Eddie Murphy, yet initially doubted that an Asian American could succeed in the comedy business. But he was buoyed by his father’s advice that “pain is temporary, quitting is forever.”

Now a stand-up comedian with regular gigs at the World Famous Laugh Factory in Hollywood, Kim founded Kollaboration, a nonprofit organization that gives Asian-American comics a stage in 15 cities. “There are so many artists that have come through our [Kollaboration] show that are living their dream,” he told other Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders at the White House event.

Kim’s entry was among nine the White House selected from more than 200 videos and 35 essays submitted by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders for the contest, launched by the Obama administration in November 2011. The contest was part of President Obama’s Champions of Change program, which encourages ordinary American



The Philadelphia Suns raise funds by performing lion dances.

citizens to share their ideas for innovative ways to benefit their communities.

Nidhi Chanani, who was born in Kolkata but now lives in San Francisco, paints whimsical images of everyday life with the purpose of reminding people “to pause in their lives and appreciate what is beautiful.” Her winning video, *Capturing Love*, demonstrates her approach. She acknowledged that for an Indian American “it is difficult to pursue something that is nontraditional, especially if you don’t see successful examples.”

Parental resistance among Asian Americans, Chanani said, is due largely to a lack of understanding and a lack of role models. “Just pursue your dreams,” she advised young Asian Americans. “It’s hard when there isn’t support, but if you are passionate about it, people will come around [and change their opinions].”

These Champions of Change were also recognized by the White House:

- Terisa Tinei Siagatonu. Originally from Samoa, she is an educator in the San Francisco Bay Area who works to help Pacific Islander youth stay in school and succeed.
- Rebecca Chin. An avid athlete, Chin uses sports to develop personal responsibility and cultural teamwork among Asian-American youth via the volunteer-led youth organization known as the Philadelphia Suns.
- Harry Leong. He is the president of the Philadelphia Suns, an organization that serves more than 500 Philadelphia youth each year by teaching teamwork and leadership skills through sports, volunteer opportunities and participating in traditional Chinese lion dance performances.
- Chu Huang. Her Chinese Immigrant Student Leadership program at Charlestown High School in Boston helps build confidence among immigrant students struggling to adapt to American society.
- Elena Chang and Suma Reddy. Their work with the Asian Pride Project in New York City promotes greater visibility and acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Asians and Pacific Islanders.
- My Linh Vo. Currently a doctoral student in clinical psychology at the John. F. Kennedy University in California, she works to encourage Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders both to recognize the need for mental health treatment and to pursue career opportunities in the mental health field.

Source: <http://goo.gl/sL1LS>

Asian Pacific American-Related Events

CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL



U.S. Stamps Commemorate Cherry Blossoms

On March 24, the U.S. Postal Service is marking the 100th anniversary of a gift of 3,000 flowering cherry trees from Japan by issuing two commemorative postage stamps that together create a panoramic view of the iconic trees in full flower around Washington’s Tidal Basin.

The cherry trees were a gift from Tokyo Mayor Yukio Ozaki to President William Howard Taft in 1912. First lady Helen Herron Taft and Viscountess Chinda, wife of the Japanese ambassador, planted the first two trees on the north bank of the Tidal Basin on March 27 of that year.

The left stamp depicts blossoming trees arching over two girls dressed in bright kimonos and a family on a stroll with the Washington Monument in the background. On the second stamp, the Jefferson Memorial forms the backdrop for tourists taking in the sights under a canopy of pink blooms.

Source: <http://goo.gl/G3dJM>

ART AND CULTURE



Serious Play: Anime and Manga in United States

Thousands flock to comic book and anime conventions in the United States each year. Here, a child looks at two people costumed as “Haku” (left) and “Etna”

for the 2011 Anime Expo in Los Angeles.

Anime — a style of animation that originated in Japan — and manga (Japanese comics) are popular in the United States. At Anime Expo and other conventions, “cosplay” (short for costume play) is popular, with fans dressing up as their favorite characters and often acting in skits. The website Animecons.org lists some 200 conventions in the United States in 2012 with anime content.

Anime is big business in North America, with roughly \$180 million in DVD sales in 2010, according to ICv2, a research company. Manga sales were around \$120 million.

Japanese anime and manga “are motivating many [young people] to start learning Japanese,” according to the Japan Foundation, which in 2010 launched an e-learning site, Japanese in Anime & Manga. Source: <http://goo.gl/6YCMV>

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Asian-Pacific American Facts Pack

In 1978, a joint congressional resolution established Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week. The first 10 days of May were chosen to coincide with two important milestones in Asian/Pacific American history: the arrival in the United States of the first Japanese immigrants (May 7, 1843) and contributions of Chinese workers to the building of the transcontinental railroad, completed May 10, 1869. In 1992, Congress expanded the observance to a month long celebration. Per a 1997 Office of Management and Budget directive, the Asian or Pacific Islander racial category was separated into two categories: one being Asian and the other Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander..

ASIAN

Population

17.3 million is estimated number of U.S. residents of Asian descent, according to the 2010 Census. This group comprised 5.6 percent of the total population. This count includes those who said they were both Asian alone (14.7 million) and Asian in combination with one or more additional races (2.6 million).

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

\$67,022 is median household income for single-race Asians in 2010.

Education

50% is the percentage of single-race Asians 25 and older who had a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. This compared with 28 percent for all Americans 25 and older.

Voting

589,000 is number of more single-race Asians voted in the 2008 presidential election than in the 2004 election. All in all, 48 percent of Asians turned out to vote in 2008 — up 4 percentage points from 2004. A total of 3.4 million Asians voted.

Businesses

1.5 million is number of businesses owned by Asian-Americans in 2007, an increase of 40.4 percent from 2002.

Languages

2.8 million is number of people 5 and older who spoke Chinese at home in 2010. After Spanish, Chinese was the most widely spoken non-English language in the country. Tagalog, Vietnamese and Korean were each spoken at home by more than 1 million people.

Serving Our Nation

265,200 is number of single-race Asian military

veterans. About one in three veterans was 65 years and older.

Jobs

48% is proportion of civilian employed single-race Asians 16 and older who worked in management, business, science and arts occupations, such as financial managers, engineers, teachers and registered nurses. Additionally, 17 percent worked in service occupations, 22 percent in sales and office occupations and 10 percent in production, transportation and material moving occupations.

Internet Use

80% is percentage of Asians living in a household with Internet use — the highest rate among race and ethnic groups.

Age Distribution

35.4 is median age of the single-race Asian population in 2010. The corresponding figure was 37.2 years for the population as a whole.

NATIVE HAWAIIANS AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDERS

Population

1.2 million is number of U.S. residents who said they were Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, either alone or in combination with one or more additional races, according to the 2010 Census.

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

\$52,776 is median income of households headed by single-race Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders.

Education

15% is percentage of single-race Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders 25 and older who had a bachelor's degree or higher. This compared with 28 percent for the total population.

Businesses

37,687 is number of Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned businesses in 2007, up 30.2 percent from 2002.

Serving Our Nation

27,800 is number of single-race Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander military veterans. About one in five veterans was 65 years and older.

Jobs

26% is proportion of civilian employed single-race Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders 16

and older who worked in management, business, science and arts occupations, such as financial managers, engineers, teachers and registered nurses (not statistically different from service and sales occupations). Additionally, 24 percent worked in service occupations, while 27 percent worked in sales and office occupations and 14 percent in production, transportation and material moving occupations.

Age Distribution

28.9 is median age of the single-race Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population in 2010. The median age was 37.2 for the population as a whole.

Source: Facts for Features, Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month: May 2012 <<http://goo.gl/CFhuf>>

Asian Pacific American-Related Events *continued from page 2*

CUISINE



Asian Fusion Cuisine Wins U.S. Fans

“Successful East-West cooking harmoniously combines two distinct culinary approaches,” says Chinese-American chef Ming Tsai, who owns the Blue Ginger restaurant in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

Many contemporary restaurants in the United States, including Blue Ginger, have a common feature on their menus: Asian fusion specialties, which combine elements of different Asian cooking styles — and often Western styles — in one dish. U.S. diners, for example, have embraced new types of sushi, including the hybrid California roll, which honors its Japanese roots but adds avocados to the mix.

Thanks to an influx of Asian immigrants, traditional Asian cooking and fusion cuisine are both mainstream fare across much of America.

Source: <http://goo.gl/MB5TQ>

For more information on Asian-Pacific American related events are available at <http://iipdigital.state.gov/>

Resources

BOOKS

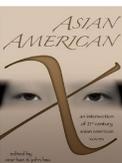


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Asian Americans and the Media / Kent A. Ono and Vincent N. Pham. Cambridge ; Malden, MA : Polity, 2009.

Chains of Babylon : The Rise of Asian America / Daryl J. Maeda. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

Asian American X : An Intersection Of Twenty-First-Century Asian American Voices / edited by Arar Han and John Hsu. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, c2004.



Everything You Need to Know about Asian-American History / Novas Himilce and Lan Cao with Rosemary Silva. New York : Plume, 2004.

Asian American Issues / Mary Yu Danico and Franklin Ng. Westport, Conn. : Greenwood Press, 2004.

For more books, check out our online catalog at <http://goo.gl/PNQqg>

VIDEOS



Asian American Contributions. Link: <http://goo.gl/f01fb>



American Born Chinese. Link: <http://goo.gl/jN0lw>



Muslim American Profiles: Zainah on Finding a Place to Call Home. Link: <http://goo.gl/Ca4AY>

Winning videos from "What's Your Story" video challenge: White House Initiative on Asian American Pacific Islander's (WHIAAPI). Link: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/aapi/whats-your-story>

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Video Interviews. Link: <http://goo.gl/UBrXM>

MORE LINKS

Asian-Pacific American Month 2012
Link: <http://asianpacificheritage.gov/>

White House Initiative on Asian American Pacific Islanders. Link: <http://goo.gl/q1cjZ>

Smithsonian Asia Pacific American Program
Link: <http://apa.si.edu/>

Portraiture Now: Asian American Portraits of Encounter at the National Portrait Gallery
Link: <http://goo.gl/cWPrf>

HomeSpun: Smithsonian Indian American Heritage Project. Link: <http://goo.gl/QklyN>

Vietnamese-American Heritage Project
Link: <http://vietam.si.edu/>

Smithsonian Folklife Festival
Link: <http://goo.gl/ucmcb>

Japanese Americans and the U.S. Constitution
Link: <http://goo.gl/DmtU>



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