

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Newsletter

San Francisco VA
Health Care System

May 2016

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“Walk Together, Embrace Differences, Build Legacies”

Happy Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month!

The Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) represents Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) employees in the federal government and the District of Columbia. FAPAC was established in 1985. It is the oldest and largest group for the federally employed AAPI community. FAPAC announced the theme for the observance of 2016’s Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage month as “Walk Together, Embrace Differences, Build Legacies.” Their mission is to “promote equal opportunity and cultural diversity...within the Federal and District of Columbia governments.”

To find out more about FAPAC, please visit www.fapac.org

How did Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month begin?

June 1977:

Representatives Frank Horton of New York and Norman Y. Mineta of California introduced a House resolution for first ten days of May as Asian/Pacific Heritage Week

July 1977:

Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga introduced a similar bill in the Senate

October 1978:

President Jimmy Carter signed a joint resolution for the annual celebration

May 1990:

President George H.W. Bush signed a bill to extend Asian/Pacific Heritage Week to Asian/Pacific Heritage Month

October 1992:

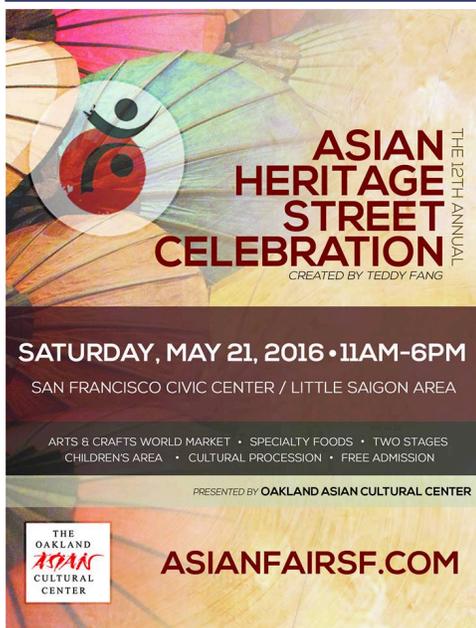
May is officially designated as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month

Information obtained from: <http://asianpacificheritage.gov/about.html>



Australia – Bangladesh – Bhutan – Brunei – Cambodia – Christmas Island – China – Coco (Keeling) Islands – Cook Islands – Easter Island – Federated States of Micronesia – Fiji – French Polynesia – Guam – Hawaiian Islands – Hmong – Hong Kong – India – Indonesia – Japan – Kiribati – Laos – Malaysia – Macau – Maldives – Marshall Islands – Micronesia – Midway Island – Mongolia – Myanmar – Nauru – Nepal – Niue – New Zealand – Norfolk Island – Northern Mariana Island – North Korea – Pakistan – Palau – Papua New Guinea – Philippines – Samoa – Singapore – Solomon Islands – South Korea – Sri Lanka – Tahiti – Taiwan – Thailand – Tibet – Timor – Tonga – Tuvalu – Vanuatu – Vietnam – Wake Island – Wallis and Funtuna Islands

Source: <http://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/aapi.aspx>



Asian Heritage Street Celebration

The Oakland Asian Cultural Center will be holding their 12th annual Asian Heritage Street Celebration on Saturday, May 21st from 11am to 6pm in San Francisco's Civic Center and Little Saigon Area.

For further information, please visit their Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/AsianHeritageStreetCelebration/

Quick Facts about the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Population



20.3 million

Estimated number of U.S. residents in 2014 who were Asian alone or in combination.¹

6.3 million

Lived in California in 2014.

California had the largest Asian population.¹

1.5 million

Estimated number of U.S. residents in 2014 who were Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander alone or in combination.¹

347,501

Lived in California in 2014. California had the second largest Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander population.¹

The AAPI community grew by **42.97%** between 2000 and 2010.²

The AAPI community is projected to grow another **134%** to over **35.6 million** over the next 40 years.²

Sources:

¹ <http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2016/cb16-ff07.html>

² <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/aapi/data/facts-and-figures>



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Written by Ileana Hahambis

The month of May marks Mental Health Awareness Month. It is a subject that I struggled to understand while growing up. It is one that I hold close, as it affects my family and close friends. I imagine that you know someone that lives with a mental illness, whether this is yourself, your sibling, your distant relative, your friend, and/or your colleague. My hope is that this newsletter article will encourage important discussion between you, your loved ones, and your colleagues.

Mental health was not a popular topic in my home. In reflecting about when was the first time I heard about or knew someone with a mental health condition, the earliest memory I have was in early high school. This was most likely due to the stigma, or “a set of negative and often unfair beliefs,”¹ related to mental health. Mental illness affects everyone. It does not select or exclude specific groups of people.

According to the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, “about one in five adults aged 18 or older had any mental illness.”² This was defined as “having any mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder...that met DSM-IV criteria.”² More specifically, approximately thirteen percent of Asian Americans and approximately three percent of Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders ages 18 and up reported a mental illness in the past year.³ This aspect of one’s everyday life must be seen and understood.

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Employee Assistance Program (EAP):

VA employees can meet or speak with an experienced, licensed counselor who is available to provide consultation, short-term problem solving, coaching, or crisis management. The EAP phoneline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

EAP services are provided as a free benefit from the VA and services are confidential within the limits of the law.

For more information, please visit www.FOH4You.com.

1-800-222-0364
TTY: 1-888-262-7848

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Although mental illness affects a wide array of people, one can be affected differently. This can be based on access to treatment, quality of care, levels of stigma, level of cultural sensitivity in health care system, racism, bias, homophobia, or discrimination in treatment settings, access to care in your preferred language, access to health insurance, etc.⁴ These issues are crucial to talk about.

During the month of May, think about how you would like to share what you know about mental health. This can include signing the stigmafree pledge through the National Alliance on Mental Health Website: <https://www.nami.org/stigmafree> and learning more about mental illness and sharing this information with others.

Sources:

¹ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/stigma>

² <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-FRR1-2014/NSDUH-FRR1-2014.pdf>

³ <http://www.samhsa.gov/specific-populations/racial-ethnic-minority>



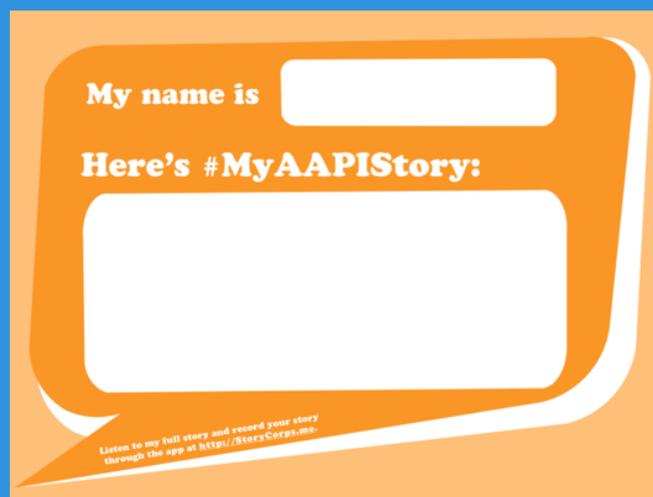
18 Million Rising launched in September 2012 “to promote AAPI civic engagement, influence, and movement by leveraging the power of technology and social media.”

You can find articles and links to articles on national activism, racism, privilege, racial identities, pop culture, etc. on their website, as well as on their Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram pages.

For more information, please visit their website: <http://18millionrising.org/index.html>

The White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) partnered up with StoryCorps to document and share your stories. For more information, please visit their website at:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2016/04/20/myaapistory-sharing-diverse-stories-aapi-community>



Celebration at Fort Miley

Please join us in celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month!

You are invited to share your story with your fellow SFVAHCS colleagues, whether this is telling us about your family history or a person(s) or event that inspires you. You may also play an instrument, read a poem, or bring an object that holds meaning to your identity.

Please note that each person will be limited to 5 minutes.

Date and Time: Tuesday, May 10th from 1-2:30pm

Location: San Francisco VA Medical Center, Teak Room



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SFVAHCS EEO Asian American and Pacific Islander
Special Emphasis Program Manager (SEPM)

The primary role of a SEPM is to work with management, as a part of the management team, to address barriers to Equal Employment Opportunity such as personnel/employment policies, procedures and practices that may have a negative or discriminatory impact on the demographic group they correspond to.

<http://www.va.gov/ORM/index.asp>

