



MAY 2024

WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING BRIO LIVING SERVICES A SAFE, WELCOMING PLACE FOR ALL TO LIVE AND WORK.

Asian American Pacific Islander Month

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (AAPI) is an annual celebration that recognizes the historical and cultural contributions of individuals and groups of Asian and Pacific Islander descent to the United States. Asian American and Pacific Islander encompasses a broad spectrum of cultures spanning the entire Asian continent, from East to Southeast to South Asia, as well as the Pacific Islands of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia.

As of the 2020 U.S. Census, approximately 20.6 million individuals of Asian or Pacific Islander descent resided in the United States from more than 20 countries. According to the Pew Research Center, the AAPI community represents a dynamic and expanding demographic, comprising roughly 7 percent of the entire U.S. population.

The month of May was selected for AAPI Heritage Month due to its historical significance. It commemorates the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States on May 7, 1843. Additionally, May holds significance as it coincides with Golden Spike Day, observed on May 10, 1869. This day marks the completion of the transcontinental railroad, a monumental achievement in American history, with substantial contributions from Chinese laborers.

May Celebrations

Older Americans Month

Jewish American Heritage Month

Mental Health Awareness Month

4th National day of Prayer

5th Holocaust

Remembrance Day

17th International Day

against Homophobia,

Transphobia, and

Biphobia

23rd Vesak (Buddha Day)

27th Memorial Day

The acronym COFA stands for the Compact of Free Association, which encompasses three treaties between the United States and Pacific Islander communities from the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. These islands are situated in the Micronesian region of the Pacific Ocean.

This treaty holds particular significance as it formalizes the developing relationship with American culture, including but not limited to matters such as militarism, labor, and healthcare.

Under this treaty, citizens of these three island nations are permitted to live and work in the United States without the need for special green cards or visas.





Team Member Spotlight

Marigold Mesko, Therapy Coordinator
Chelsea Retirement Community

I was born and raised in a remote island of Sibuyan, in the province of Romblon, Philippines. Sibuyan was one of the battle grounds during World War II, where U.S. forces attacked, sank, and damaged Japanese naval forces. It is known in history as the Battle of Sibuyan Sea.



My country is home to about 7,641 islands, where every region has its own dialect. It is an archipelago, and it is the world's fifth largest island country. I speak my native dialect, which is Visayan, as well as Tagalog which is the national language of the Philippines. One tradition that is unique to my island of mostly Catholics, is praying the Angelus. Every night at 6 o'clock the church bell would signal, and everyone would pause for a couple minutes to say the Angelus.

I am of Filipino, Chinese, and Spanish descent. My maternal grandfather was Chinese and paternal grandparents were Spanish. I never learned to speak Cantonese or Mandarin Chinese, and only understand a little Spanish. I immigrated to the U.S. in 2004 and have lived in Michigan ever since. Other than family and friends, I miss Filipino food the most. Philippines' gastronomy is so diverse and unique, mostly with Spanish, Chinese, and western influences. Each region has its own delicious delicacies.

Sources used in this Spotlight

<https://asianpacificheritage.gov/about.html>
U.S. Census Bureau <https://www.census.gov/>
Pew Research Center <https://www.pewresearch.org/>
National Park Service <https://www.nps.gov/>

Inspiring Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have made significant contributions across various facets of American culture and society, spanning fields such as science and medicine, literature and art, sports and recreation, government and politics, and activism and law. Notably, in 2021, **Kamala Harris** made history as the first Asian American Vice President of the United States. Furthermore, the visibility of AAPI individuals, narratives, and traditions has grown, exemplified by South Korean director **Bong Joon Ho's** Academy Award-winning film 'Parasite' in 2019 and the introduction of Marvel's first Asian superhero with the release of 'Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings' in 2021.

The AAPI community boasts a rich and extensive history in the United States, countering the persistent stereotype of being viewed as 'perpetual foreigners.' This stereotype wrongly suggests that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are inherently foreign, other, and not authentically American. According to the Bering Land Bridge Theory, Asians embarked on their migration to what we now recognize as North America over 15,000 years ago, traversing a land bridge connecting Asia and North America.

Famous Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson of Samoan descent, has become one of the world's most influential people.

A novelist of Chinese descent **Amy Tan** is best known for her best-selling book, *The Joy Luck Club*.

Kalpana Chawla a NASA astronaut and mechanical engineer made history as the first woman of Indian origin to go into space aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia.

Cellist **Yo-Yo Ma** born to Chinese parents has played for multiple presidents from John F. Kennedy to Barack Obama.



Artist, Hiroshige Ando

Patsy Mink was the first woman of color and the first Asian-American elected to Congress.

In 1981 **Maya Lin** a young Chinese American woman designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. which has been deemed a powerful and important piece of American history.