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Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month: A Celebration of Cultures

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Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month: A Celebration of Cultures

By Diane Osman, Lauren Markert '22

Though the official national celebration of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month takes place in May, the University of Dayton celebrates it in April before the end of the traditional academic year, while students are on campus in greater numbers. UD's Multi-Ethnic Education and Engagement Center has [compiled a list of events](#) across campus that promote education, engagement, empowerment and advocacy.

HISTORY OF ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

In 1992, Congress unanimously ratified a resolution to designate the month of May as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, and President George H.W. Bush signed the law. May was chosen to commemorate the arrival of the first known Japanese immigrant to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to honor the contribution Chinese workers made to the transcontinental railroad, which had its ceremonial completion on May 10, 1869. Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month honors the culture, traditions and history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States. Generations of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have helped develop and defend the United States, often in the face of racial and cultural prejudice.

The Asian American-Pacific Islander community encompasses nearly 50 countries and ethnic groups with distinct cultures, traditions, languages, dialects and histories.

- **East Asian** refers to people from China (including Macau and Hong Kong), Korea, Japan, Okinawa, Taiwan and Mongolia.

PREVIOUS POST

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- **South Asian** refers to people from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Ethnic groups include Sindhi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Tamil and many others.

- **Southeast Asian** refers to people from the following countries and ethnic groups: Burma, Brunei, Cambodia (Khmer, Cham, KhmerLoeu), Indonesia, Laos (Hmong,

Lao, Lao Loum, Lu Mien, Khmu, Tai Dam, Tai Leu and many other ethnic groups), Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Philippines and Vietnam (Vietnamese, Khmer Kampuchea Krom, Montagnards).

- **Pacific Islander** refers to those whose origins are the original peoples of Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia. Polynesia includes Hawaii, Samoa, American

Samoa, Tokelau, Tahiti and Tonga. Micronesia includes Guam , Mariana Islands, Saipan, Palau, Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae, Marshall Islands and Kiribati.

Melanesia includes Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

The entire population stands at more than 19 million individuals in the United States as of April 2020. The University Libraries have a wide range of resources that highlight Asian/Pacific American heritage and achievements.

RESEARCH GUIDE

- [Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month](#)

ARTICLES AND RESOURCES

- [“In 1968, These Activists Coined the Term 'Asian American'—And Helped Shape Decades of Advocacy”](#) (*Time*, May 22, 2020): This article explores the roots of the phrase “Asian American,” which was coined in 1968 by University of California Berkeley graduate students

learning
experience at
University of
Dayton,
supports
student
success and
strengthens
faculty
research.

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Emma Gee and Yuji Ichioka. The phrase was intended to create an umbrella term to create solidarity and to strengthen advocacy for civil rights.

- **“A History of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander Health Policy”** (*Asian American Policy Review*, Spring 2020): This article documents the history and advancement of health care in the United States for minorities. Authors discuss the progress and results of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and overall minority health care.

- **“Inter-Imperial Relations, the Pacific, and Asian American History”** (*Pacific Historical Review*, 2014): This article argues that historians of Asian America have largely neglected and need to reflect upon inter-

imperial relations—the relations of cooperation, competition and conflict between empires.

- **“Private, Public, and Somewhere in Between: Lessons from the History of Asian-Pacific American Women”** (*Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, Spring 1996): This piece discusses the history of Asian and Pacific

women in the United States, following a variety of laws, traditions and milestones.

- **“Pacific-ing Asian Pacific American History”** (*Journal of Asian American Studies*, October 2004): This piece discusses the positioning of Pacific Islands scholars and research in the Asian American studies discipline.

- ***The State of Asian America: Activism and Resistance in the 1990s*** (Boston: South End Press, 1994): This collection of essays offers analysis on a range of pressing issues, including the 1992 Los Angeles uprising, the protest against the Broadway musical *Miss Saigon*, anti-Asian violence and domestic violence.

- ***History of Asian Americans: Exploring Diverse Roots*** (Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood Press, 2015): Chronologically organized this starts with Chinese

chronologically organized, and starts with Chinese immigration to the United States and concludes with coverage of Asian migrant populations, describing Asian American lives and experiences and documenting them as an essential part of the American experience.

FILMS ON DEMAND

[Films on Demand](#) is a subscription-based streaming service accessible through the Libraries website with UD login and authentication.

- [Korean Americans](#): This 50-minute program examines conflicts between Korean Americans and inner-city African Americans and explores the efforts of the Korean American community to overcome the rejection of the community around them.
- [Gold Mountain Dreams](#): In the 1840s, civil war and famine in southern China drove thousands of young men to seek their fortune in the California gold rush. This program traces the Chinese experience in America from their arrival in San Francisco through the Gold Rush and building of the Transcontinental Railroad, to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act banning their entry.
- [A Personal Journey with Maya Lin, Artist and Architect](#): Sculptor, architect, and designer Maya Lin catapulted to prominence when, as a senior at Yale University, she was chosen to design the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Bill Moyers talks with her about her upbringing and her multifaceted career.
- [No Turning Back](#): The new immigration laws of 1965 allowed a new wave of immigrants to enter the country. Chinese American life has flourished in the years since. Narrated by Bill Moyers, this program presents intimate portraits of Chinese Americans as they reconcile some cultural losses in order to embrace American life.
- [More Than a Face in the Crowd: The Fifty-Year Career of Asian-American Actress Jane Chung](#): A filmmaker

explores the life of her great-aunt, the actress Jane Chung, who made a career for herself at a time when Asian Americans faced widespread racism in Hollywood. Her career reflects many of the struggles and triumphs of the Asian Americans working in the entertainment industry. The film reveals a larger untold story of Asian American actors and extras in Hollywood.

- **Asian Americans:** This film series traces 150 years of immigration, racial politics and cultural innovation.

Diane Osman, a member of the University Libraries diversity and inclusion team, works in the dean's office. Lauren Markert '22 is a junior and works in the dean's office.

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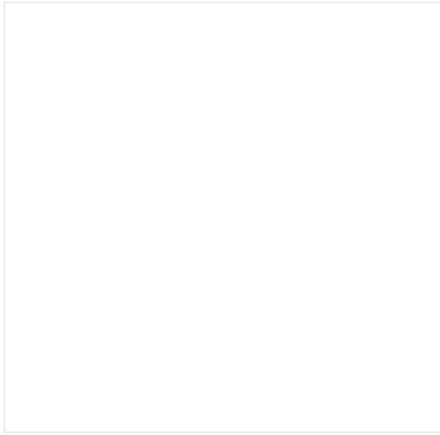
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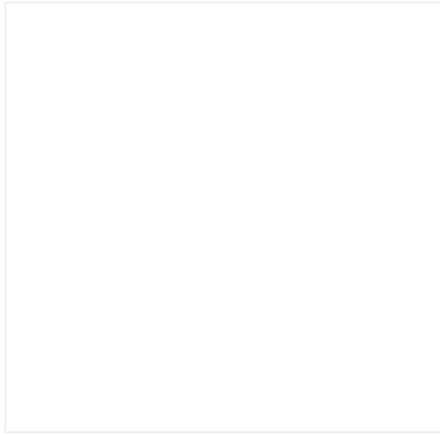
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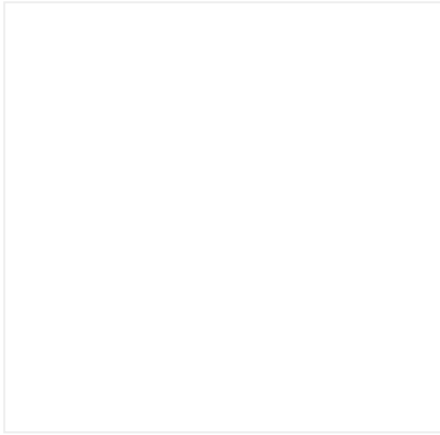
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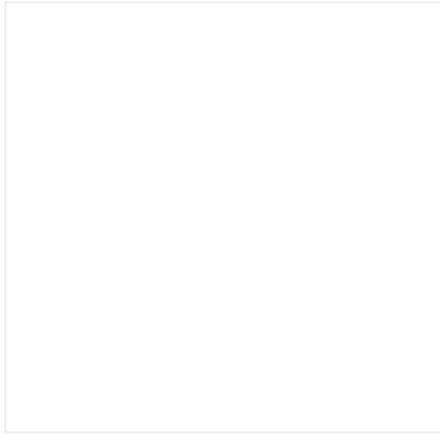
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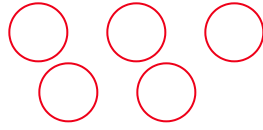
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