
Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 7189 of April 30, 1999

The President

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Seeking America's bright promise of freedom and fairness, millions of men and women of Asian and Pacific descent have immigrated to our Nation through the past 2 centuries to participate in our great experiment in democracy. Although they left behind their native lands and many of their loved ones, they carried in their hearts a rich and ancient history and a proud heritage.

Throughout the decades, the principles and cherished traditions of Asian and Pacific Americans have infused our way of life, and their diligence and determination have helped build and sustain our Nation. Asian immigrants and indigenous U.S. Pacific Islanders have made contributions to every facet of American life. Yet all too often, Asian immigrants and Pacific Islanders had to endure discrimination as our society struggled with its growing diversity. Overcoming prejudice and other hardships, these determined men and women have strengthened our society, our economy, and our national character in the process.

Asian and Pacific Americans today continue to make substantial contributions to our country and our culture, and this year's theme, "Celebrating Our Legacy," calls on us to recognize our common human spirit. Scientists and researchers like David Ho untangle the mysteries of human biology; astronauts like Kalpana Chawla explore the heavens; human rights activists like Dith Pran inspire us with their courage and conviction; athletes like Michele Kwan dazzle us with their grace and endurance; and inspiring leaders like Daniel Inouye and Bill Lann Lee fight for justice and equality for all our people. These sons and daughters of Vietnam, India, China, Korea, Japan, Cambodia, Fiji, the Philippines, Thailand, and many other nations, as well as the islands of Guam, American Samoa, and Hawaii, have enriched every aspect of our society with their talents, intellect, and determination.

While our Nation has made enormous strides on the path to full equality and inclusion, our work is far from finished. My Administration has strived to empower the Asian and Pacific American community by working to strengthen our economy, enforce our civil rights laws, invest in health and education, and promote racial reconciliation. Thanks in part to our economic initiatives, the median household income for Asian and Pacific Americans has significantly increased since 1993, while the poverty rate has declined by more than 8 percent. We have launched a new initiative to end racial and ethnic health disparities, and we established the first-ever Office of Minority Health Research and Alternative Medicine at the National Institutes of Health. Working to renew our commitment to excellence in education, my Administration also has secured a 35 percent increase in funding for bilingual and immigrant education.

To honor the accomplishments of Asian and Pacific Americans and to recognize their many contributions to our Nation, the Congress, by Public Law 102-450, has designated the month of May as "Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 1999 as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this occasion with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William J. Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "W" and "C".

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