

OBSERVANCE



Captain Kwang-Ping Hsu was the first foreign-born cadet at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

In the first 10 years of his career, he achieved the rank of lieutenant commander and earned two Coast Guard Air Medals for exceptional air rescue efforts.

People remember him for his excellent skills as a pilot and rescuer as well as his compassion and sense of humor. His record of Service extended over 30 years.

In 2007, Hsu passed away. His son David, a former Army Special Forces officer, said, “Dad always viewed his life as nothing less than extraordinary—a journey beyond any he could have imagined due to the opportunities of America and the Coast Guard.”



ADVANCING
THROUGH
PURPOSE-DRIVEN
SERVICE

The Department of Defense pays tribute to the generations of **Asian American and Pacific Islanders** (AAPI) who have enriched our nation’s history and who continue to be pivotal to our success as a nation as we move into the future.

ASIAN AMERICAN
PACIFIC ISLANDER
HERITAGE MONTH
MAY 2021



AAPI encompass a diverse group of cultures, ethnicities, races, and languages. They include all Americans who trace their ancestry back to the Asian continent and the many Pacific islands of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia.



In 2020, **Chief Master Sergeant JoAnne Bass** formally took the reins as the Air Force's 19th Chief Master Sergeant.

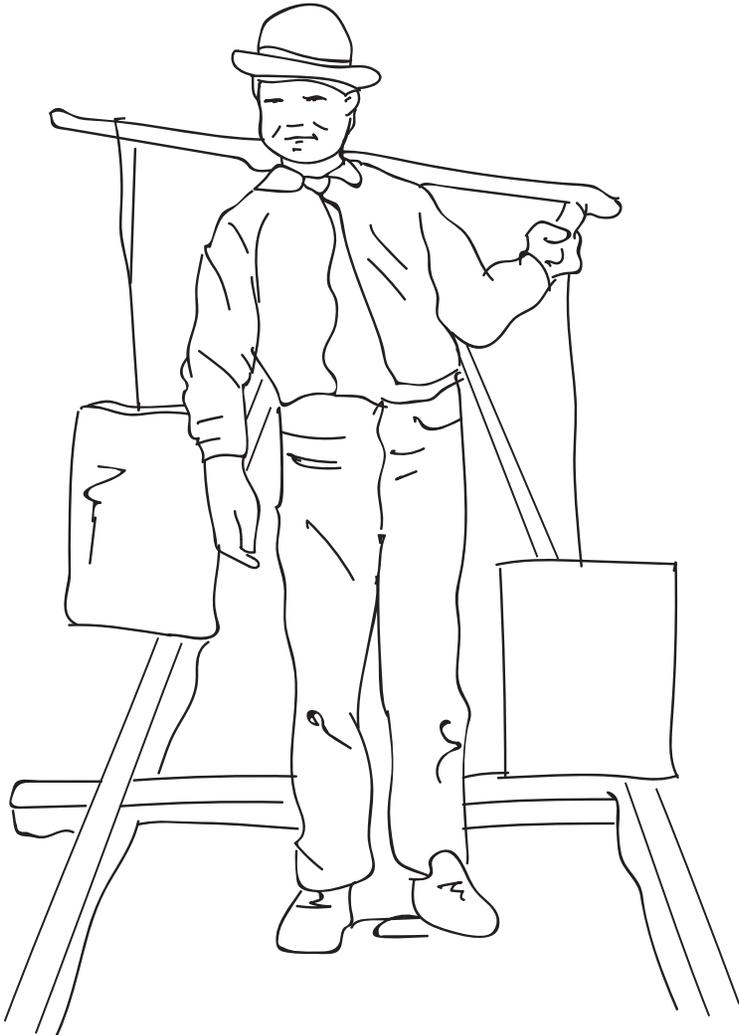
Bass' appointment makes her the first woman, and the first person of Asian American descent, to be elevated to the Service's highest enlisted rank.

At her Change of Responsibility ceremony, she said she would continue the leadership principles she learned from her parents and her husband, Rahn.

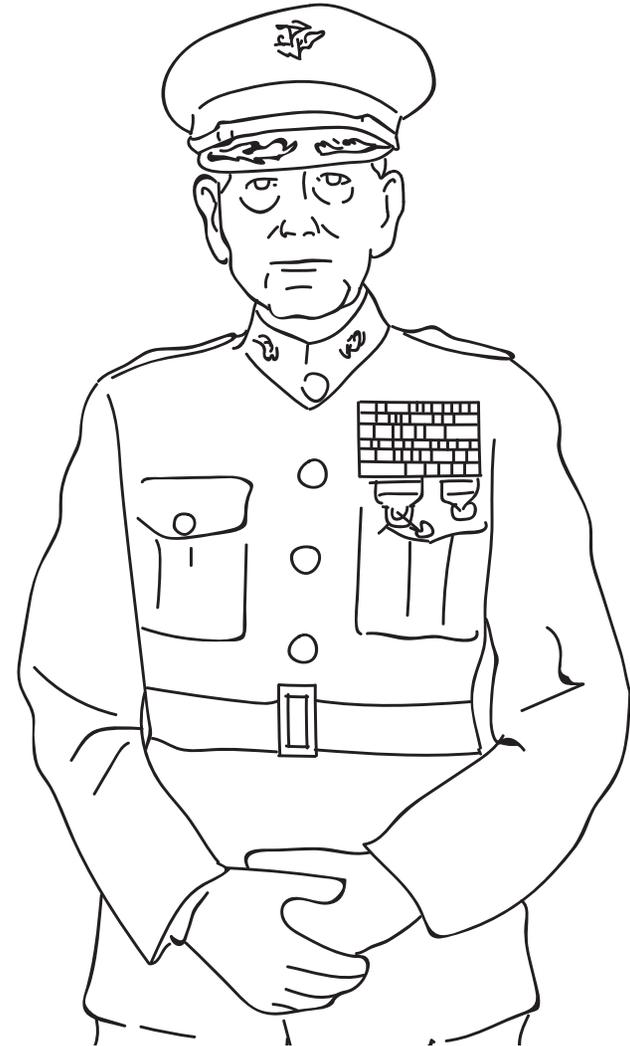
"What my parents did instill in me is the value of hard work and treating people well," she said.

And regarding her husband, *"He taught me to always take the 'hard right' versus the 'easy wrong.' And my word to all Airmen is that we will always take the hard right; meaning, we will always do the right thing even when it's not comfortable."*

May serves as the observance month to commemorate the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States on May 10, 1843. The date also marks the anniversary of the transcontinental railroad completion on May 10, 1869.



From 1865-1869, twelve thousand Chinese immigrants constructed the western section of the transcontinental railroad—one of the greatest engineering feats in American history.



Major Kurt Chew-Een Lee, the son of Chinese immigrants, was the first Asian American Marine Corps officer.

Through his military career, which spanned from World War II to the Vietnam War, he was awarded numerous medals for bravery.

When interviewed in 2010 about his distinguished military career and his bravery, Lee said, *“I am most proud of being able to train future generations of Marines.”*

DESIGN YOUR OWN CHERRY BLOSSOM TREE

The **National Cherry Blossom Festival** is a spring celebration in Washington, D.C.,

Mayor Yukio Ozaki of Tokyo City donated the trees to enhance the growing friendship between the United States and Japan and also celebrate the continued close relationship between the two nations.

The first two of the 3,000 trees were planted on March 27, 1912, by first lady Helen Taft and the wife of the Japanese ambassador.

Today, 100 years later, hundreds of thousands of people come each year to walk under the gently arching branches of the Yoshino, Akebono, and Kwanzan trees.

For more information:
<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/cherryblossom/history-of-the-cherry-trees.htm>

