



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

APR 26 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: 2023 Department of Defense Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month
Observance

The Department of Defense celebrates May 1-31, 2023, as Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month. During this time, we acknowledge the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who have served the Nation and are instrumental to its future success.

This year's theme, *Advancing Leaders Through Opportunity*, focuses on talent management. Developing an inclusive workplace, where all members experience a sense of belonging and opportunity to succeed is essential to our readiness to fight and win America's wars. We must continue our efforts to reach and welcome underrepresented populations, including the Asian American and Pacific Islander community, so that we are postured to meet current and future operational requirements. Through events such as the Department's Taking the Pentagon to the People, we are broadening our efforts to attract diverse talent. I encourage you, whenever possible, to engage in efforts to raise awareness among underrepresented communities of DoD's mission-critical occupations and opportunities for education, internships, employment, and research so that we may recruit the most qualified personnel nationwide to equip and strengthen our Total Force against global and domestic threats.

Unfortunately, members of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities continue to experience xenophobic behaviors and hate-fueled violence in America. As a Department, we must provide climates which are safe, value diversity and inclusion, and provide opportunities for all to reach their full potential.

We are charged with protecting our country and will meet that challenge by appealing to the nation's best talent and providing equitable opportunities for their continued advancement. For resources and help with leading and organizing observances, visit:
<https://www.defenseculture.mil/Human-Relations-Toolkit/Special-Observances/#asian-american-pacific-islander-heritage-month>.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.