

**May Facts of the Day 2015**



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Day	Fact	Source
1	For the 2015 Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, the Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) has chosen the theme “ <i>Many Cultures, One Voice: Promote Equality and Inclusion.</i> ” This theme emphasizes the diversity of the AAPI members of the FAPAC, who come from over 30 ethnically distinct groups originating from the Asian and Pacific regions. It also demonstrates their unity in pursuing equal opportunity for all.	<a href="http://www.fapac.org/">http://www.fapac.org/</a>
2	In 1978, President Jimmy Carter designated the first 10 days of May as Asian-Pacific Heritage Week. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed an extension making it a month-long celebration. In 1992, a law was signed officially designating May as Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month. May was chosen because the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the U.S. on May 7, 1843, and the transcontinental railroad—which was largely built by Chinese immigrants—was completed on May 10, 1869.	<a href="http://asianpacificheritage.gov/about.html">http://asianpacificheritage.gov/about.html</a>
3	A rather broad term, Asian-Pacific encompasses all of the Asian continent and the Pacific islands of Melanesia (New Guinea, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji, and the Solomon Islands), Micronesia (Marianas, Guam, Wake Island, Palau, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, and the Federated States of Micronesia), and Polynesia (New Zealand, Hawaiian Islands, Rotuma, Midway Islands, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, and Easter Island).	<a href="http://asianpacificheritage.gov/about.html">http://asianpacificheritage.gov/about.html</a>
4	Nicknamed Road Runner for her energy and enthusiasm, Carolyn Hisako Tanaka served in Vietnam despite having been placed in an internment camp with her family following the attack on Pearl Harbor when she was six years old. After the war, the family returned to find their home had been burned down. In 1966, as an emergency room nurse, she enlisted in the Army, telling skeptical friends, “ <i>I have a skill that is needed in Vietnam, and I’m going there to do my duty for my country.</i> ”	<a href="http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.07154/">http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.07154/</a>

5	<p>Asian-American women first joined the U.S. military during World War II when the Women's Army Corps recruited 50 Japanese-American and Chinese-American women as military translators. Of these women, 21 were assigned to the Pacific Military Intelligence Research Section in Maryland. There they worked with captured Japanese documents, extracting information pertaining to military plans, as well as political and economic information that impacted Japan's ability to conduct the war.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html">http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html</a></p>
6	<p>In 1943, the Women's Army Corps recruited a unit of Chinese-American women to serve with the Army Air Forces as "Air WACs." The Army lowered the height and weight requirements for the women of this unit. The first two women to enlist in the unit were Hazel (Toy) Nakashima and Jit Wong, both of California. Air WACs served in a large variety of jobs, including aerial photo interpretation, air traffic control, and weather forecasting.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html">http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html</a></p>
7	<p>Jerry Yang was born in Taiwan in 1968. At age 10, he moved with his family to California. At the time, he only spoke Chinese, but he soon learned English and was a straight-A student. He graduated from Stanford University with bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering. While pursuing a PhD at Stanford in the early 1990s, he and his friend David Filo developed software to organize websites, making them easier to find. In 1996, the pair went public with their company, Yahoo.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Jerry_Yang.aspx">http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Jerry_Yang.aspx</a></p>
8	<p>In June 1944, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion, which were formed independently, were combined. The 100th Battalion, the first U.S. Army unit of Japanese Americans activated in World War II in 1942, became the 442nd's 1st battalion. The 442nd—made up of Japanese-American volunteers from internment camps, Hawaii, states outside of the West Coast exclusion zone, and those who were in the Army before the outbreak of World War II—was activated in 1943.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.the442.org/442ndfacts.html">http://www.the442.org/442ndfacts.html</a></p>

9	<p>Duke Kahanamoku was born in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1890. As a swimmer, he set multiple world records and won gold and silver medals in both individual and team events in the 1912, 1920, and 1924 Olympic Games. He is credited with making surfing popular around the world, effectively saving it from being among the many Hawaiian traditions that disappeared. He traveled the United States and Australia doing swimming and surfing exhibitions and became known as the “Father of Modern Surfing.”</p>	<p><a href="http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Duke_Kahanamoku.aspx">http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Duke_Kahanamoku.aspx</a></p>
10	<p>Private Jose B. Nisperos became the first Filipino and the first Asian American to be awarded the Medal of Honor. On September 24, 1911, while fighting as a member of the 34th Company, Philippine Scouts, he was severely wounded. His left arm was broken and lacerated, and he had several spear wounds that made him unable to stand. Despite his injuries, Nisperos continued to fire his rifle with one hand until the enemy was repulsed, helping to prevent the annihilation of his party.</p>	<p><a href="http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipientid=2051">http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipientid=2051</a></p>
11	<p>Filipino-American women worked with the underground resistance movement to help American forces in the Philippines throughout the three-year period of Japanese occupation during World War II. These courageous individuals smuggled food and medicine to American prisoners of war and carried information on Japanese deployments to Filipino and American forces working to sabotage the Japanese Army.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html">http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html</a></p>
12	<p>Dalip Singh Saund was born in India in 1899. After finishing a bachelor’s degree, he moved to the U.S. and earned a PhD from the University of California in 1924. Saund started the Indian Association of America to help promote the Luce-Cellar Act of 1946 to open citizenship to Indian immigrants, which President Truman signed into law. He became a U.S. citizen in 1949, and in 1956, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as the first Asian American and the first Sikh in Congress.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-2506300146.html">http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-2506300146.html</a></p>

13	<p>At the age of 20, Jimmie Kanaya enlisted in the Army in 1941—months before the attack on Pearl Harbor. After helping his parents relocate from their Oregon home to an internment camp, Kanaya took his skills as a medic to the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. He aggressively looked out for his men. Captured by German troops, he escaped three times and at war's end was the only non-Caucasian in his POW camp. Kanaya continued to serve his country during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.</p>	<p><a href="http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.21666/">http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.21666/</a></p>
14	<p>Florence Smith Finch, the daughter of an American soldier and a Filipino mother, was working for the U.S. Army when the Japanese occupied Manila, the Philippines. As a Filipino citizen, she avoided internment. She joined the underground resistance movement and smuggled food and supplies to American captives. Eventually, she was arrested by the Japanese, tortured, and sentenced to three years of imprisonment. After being freed by American forces, she enlisted in the Coast Guard.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html">http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html</a></p>
15	<p>Ellison Onizuka, a grandson of Japanese immigrants, was born in Hawaii in 1946. As a child, he dreamed of becoming an astronaut. After earning a master's in aerospace engineering, he joined the Air Force. In 1978, he began NASA's astronaut training program. Onizuka became the first Asian American, the first Hawaiian, and the first Buddhist in space in 1985 aboard the space shuttle <i>Discovery</i>. In 1986, he and the rest of the crew perished when the <i>Challenger</i> exploded shortly after takeoff.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3446400150.html">http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3446400150.html</a></p>
16	<p>Judge Herbert Choy was the first person of Korean ancestry admitted to the bar in the U.S. and became the first Asian-American federal judge in 1971. After graduating Harvard, Choy joined the Army following the attack on Pearl Harbor. He entered the Army as a lieutenant and left as a captain, after serving in both Japan and Korea, part of the time as a member of the Army's Judge Advocate General's Corps. Choy retired as a lieutenant colonel from the Army Reserves JAG Corps.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.army.mil/asianpacificamericans/profiles">http://www.army.mil/asianpacificamericans/profiles</a></p>

17	<p>On June 21, 2013, Brigadier General John M. Cho became the first Active Component American Soldier of Korean descent to achieve that rank. Cho graduated high school at age 16, then studied at UCLA for a year before going to West Point. He joined the Army because of the sense of loyalty and appreciation for America his parents instilled in him. His father, who had been a Republic of Korea lieutenant fighting in the Korean War, moved to the U.S. after losing his mother and sister in that war.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.army.mil/article/106793/FIRST_ACTIVE_COMPONENT_AMERICAN_OF_KOREAN_DESCENT_PROMOTED/">http://www.army.mil/article/106793/FIRST_ACTIVE_COMPONENT_AMERICAN_OF_KOREAN_DESCENT_PROMOTED/</a></p>
18	<p><i>“I'm proud of my Asian American heritage, and being able to blend the two cultures together and to learn from each is fulfilling. I feel the values and traits of my Japanese ancestors have been instilled in me through my parents and grandparents, and I know their sacrifices paved the way for me to live the American dream.”</i> — Kristi Yamaguchi, Olympic Gold Medalist</p>	<p><a href="http://www.army.mil/asianpacificamericans/">http://www.army.mil/asianpacificamericans/</a></p>
19	<p>In 2012, there were 18.9 million U.S. residents who were Asian, either one race or in combination with one or more additional races. This group experienced a 46 percent population growth between the 2000 and 2010 censuses, which was more than any other major race group.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html">http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html</a></p>
20	<p>In 2012, there were 1.4 million U.S. residents who were Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, either alone or in combination with one or more additional races. Of these, 364,395 lived in Hawaii, which had the largest population of this racial group, followed by California at 333,893. The Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders represented the largest population portion in Hawaii at 26 percent.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html">http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html</a></p>

21	<p>In 2007, Ken Niumatalolo was named head coach of the U.S. Naval Academy's football team, making him the first Samoan collegiate head coach. He had previously been a position coach for the Naval Academy. In college, he was a quarterback at the University of Hawaii, where he stayed on as a full-time assistant after graduating. Niumatalolo was born and raised in Hawaii. His parents were immigrants from American Samoa, and his father was a cook in the Coast Guard for 23 years.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.army.mil/mobile/article/?p=10343">http://www.army.mil/mobile/article/?p=10343</a> 3</p>
22	<p>Born in Xian, China, Colonel Yeu-Tsu "Margaret" Lee, U.S. Army Medical Corps, was one of four active duty surgeons assigned to the 13th Evacuation Hospital, a National Guard unit from Wisconsin, during Operation Desert Storm. The unit set up a 400-bed hospital in northern Saudi Arabia and performed 125 operations.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html">http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/APA.html</a></p>
23	<p>There were 528,991 Native Hawaiians in the U.S. in 2012. The Native Hawaiian population was the largest detailed Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (NHPI) group, followed by Samoan (172,595) and Guamanian or Chamorro (130,223). These estimates represent the number of people who reported a specific detailed NHPI group alone, as well as people who reported that detailed NHPI group in combination with one or more other detailed NHPI groups or another race(s).</p>	<p><a href="http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html">http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html</a></p>
24	<p>There were 4.2 million Asians of Chinese (not including Taiwanese) descent in the U.S. in 2012, making it the largest Asian-American group. The next largest was Filipinos at 3.6 million, followed by Asian Indians at 3.3 million, Vietnamese at 1.9 million, Koreans at 1.8 million, and Japanese at 1.3 million. These estimates represent the number of people who reported a specific detailed Asian group alone or in combination with one or more other detailed Asian groups or other race(s).</p>	<p><a href="http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html">http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html</a></p>

25	<p>Brigadier General Viet Luong became the first Vietnamese-born general officer in the U.S. military on August 6, 2014. Luong was 9 years old when his family escaped Vietnam the day before Saigon fell in 1975. His father, who served in the Vietnamese Marine Corps, inspired him to join the military. He also credits his experience of escaping Vietnam on the USS Hancock with making him deeply patriotic with a desire to give back to the nation that provided him with great opportunities.</p>	<p><a href="http://archive.armytimes.com/article/20140806/CAREERS03/308060058/New-one-star-U-S-military-s-first-general-born-Vietnam">http://archive.armytimes.com/article/20140806/CAREERS03/308060058/New-one-star-U-S-military-s-first-general-born-Vietnam</a></p>
26	<p>David Ho was born in Taiwan in 1952 and moved to the U.S. when he was 12. After earning his MD from the Harvard-MIT Division of Health Sciences and Technology, he did his residency at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, where he saw some of the first cases of AIDS. For almost 30 years, he has been a leading AIDS researcher, and he helped developed the anti-retroviral therapy used to treat AIDS patients. Along with others, Ho is working to develop an AIDS vaccine.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.education.com/magazine/article/famous-asian-americans-sciences/">http://www.education.com/magazine/article/famous-asian-americans-sciences/</a></p>
27	<p>In 2012, 50.5 percent of the Asian alone population aged 25 or older had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 29.1 percent for all Americans. The percentage of the Asian alone population 25 and older with a graduate or professional degree was 21.2 percent, compared to 10.9 percent for all Americans. Of those who identified as Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders alone, 14.8 percent had at least a bachelor's degree, and 4.7 percent had a graduate or professional degree.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html">http://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2014/cb14-ff13.html</a></p>
28	<p>Captain Francis B. Wai joined the National Guard and was commissioned as an officer in 1941. Wai was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions in 1944 in the Philippines. After their leaders had been killed or wounded, the American troops were disorganized, so he took command. He was killed after purposely drawing fire to himself to reveal enemy positions. His actions allowed the Americans to defeat the enemy. His award was upgraded to a Medal of Honor in 1998.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.asianweek.com/2009/07/07/chinese-american-hero-francis-b-wai">http://www.asianweek.com/2009/07/07/chinese-american-hero-francis-b-wai</a></p>

29	<p>Kalpana Chawla was born in India in 1961. She earned a degree in aeronautical engineering before moving to the U.S. and becoming a citizen in the 1980s. After earning her doctorate in 1988, she worked at NASA's Ames Research Center. In 1997, she became the first Indian-born woman in space when she flew aboard the space shuttle <i>Columbia</i>. In 2003, she flew on her second mission, also aboard <i>Columbia</i>. Upon re-entering the atmosphere, the shuttle broke up, killing the entire crew.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.space.com/17056-kalpana-chawla-biography.html">http://www.space.com/17056-kalpana-chawla-biography.html</a></p>
30	<p>Admiral Harry B. Harris Jr. was born in Japan and grew up in Tennessee and Florida. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1978 and became a naval flight officer. He has served in every geographic combatant command region, and his graduate education focused on East Asia security. He attended Harvard, Georgetown, and Oxford, and he was an MIT Seminar 21 fellow. In October 2013, Harris was promoted to admiral and assumed command of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.navy.mil/navydata/bios/navybio.asp?bioID=136">http://www.navy.mil/navydata/bios/navybio.asp?bioID=136</a></p>
31	<p><i>"I feel very fortunate to have two sets of cultures to enjoy—American and Vietnamese. Rather than divide my identity in half, these two sets of experience double my understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of the world around me."</i> — C.N. Le, professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst</p>	<p><a href="http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2011/05/20110504104908esiuo10.9260218.html">http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2011/05/20110504104908esiuo10.9260218.html</a></p>