



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN AFFAIRS

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Seventh Annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Celebration In Lansing, May 19, 2009

Lansing, MI - The seventh annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Celebration will take place at the State Capitol on May 19, 2009. This year's theme, "Celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage" honors the many contributions citizens of Asian and Pacific Island ancestry have made to America. Through their entrepreneurship and strong values of love and family, they have strengthened the economy and enriched communities across the nation. The celebration features a multi-cultural program highlighting traditional dance performance, video clips of various Asian ethnicities and sampling of authentic Asian cuisines. Most importantly, Dr. Leslie E. "Les" Wong, President of Northern Michigan University, will give the keynote address. The event will take place from 10 am until 2 pm.

Like most commemorative months, Asian Pacific Heritage Month originated in Congress. In June 1977, Representatives Frank Horton of New York and Norman Y. Mineta of California introduced a House resolution that called upon the President to proclaim the first ten days of May as Asian Pacific Heritage Week. The following month, Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga introduced a similar bill in the Senate. Both were passed. On October 5, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a Joint Resolution designating the annual celebration. Twelve years later, President George H.W. Bush signed an extension making the week-long celebration into a month-long celebration. In 1992, the official designation of May as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month was signed into law.¹

¹ The month of May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

For additional information or to request special accommodations, please contact Hoon-Yung Hopgood at 313/510-4358 or hoonhop@hotmail.com.

For more information on the Governor's Advisory Council on Asian Pacific American Affairs, visit <http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr-acapaa>.

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