



Friends and colleagues:

Every year in the month of May, we celebrate Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month. It has been estimated that Washington is home to over 630,000 Asian Americans and almost 50,000 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders in Washington State.

The Federal Government defines “Asian” to include persons “having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent...” and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander as persons “having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.” When looking at the lines drawn and comparing it to the world map, we see that Asian and Pacific Islander encompass more than those two distinguished groups. Just as Arab-Americans had advocated for their ethnic group to be recognized in the U.S. Census, so have the ethnic groups categorized under AANHPI as their identities may not seamlessly align within this category. These peoples can also be identified as APIDA as it includes Desi-American, as a pan-ethnic classification that intentionally includes South Asians (Desi) as part of the community. Below are examples of the broader categorizations of these communities:

- **Central Asians:** Afghani, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgians, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mongolian, Tajik, Turkmen, Uzbek
- **East Asians:** Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Okinawan, Taiwanese, Tibetan
- **Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders:** (in the United States Jurisdictions & Territories) Carolinian, Chamorro, Chuukese, Fijian, Guamanian, Hawaiian, Kosraean, Marshallese, Native Hawaiian, Niuean, Palauan, Pohnpeian, Samoan, Tokelauan, Tongan, Yapese
- **Southeast Asians:** Bruneian, Burmese, Cambodian, Filipino, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Malaysian, Mien, Papua New Guinean, Singaporean, Timorese, Thai, Vietnamese
- **South Asians:** Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Indian, Maldivians, Nepali, Pakistani, Sri Lankan
- **West Asians:** This is a contested term, most people from the region do not self-identify as such. West Asia is typically referred to as the Middle East; and geographically includes the countries of Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey (straddles Europe and Asia) United Arab Emirates and Yemen

With mounting anxieties about the spread of COVID-19, the Asian American group, in particular, has been additionally burdened by heightened racial tension and racist microaggressions, as well as a surge in racially motivated hate crimes involving physical violence and harassment. Meanwhile, an estimated 2 million Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islanders have served on the front lines of this crisis as healthcare providers, first responders, and in other essential roles.

Despite the hardships they have experienced throughout American history, the AANHPI groups are some of the fastest growing demographic in the U.S. and has contributed to our nation in many ways. They add to the vibrancy of our country through a diversity of experiences, cultures, languages, foods, and religions. AANHPIs also bring stories of their diaspora and migration, adapting to new lives, and of their U.S.-born children who then faced different circumstances.

Learn more about AANHPI communities by clicking the embedded links or accessing the links on the next page.

With care,
Ha, Melissa, and Christina

Learn more about AANHPI communities:

- AAPI Data
- Pew Research: Key Facts About Asian Americans
- API-GBV Census Data & API Identities
- COVID-19 Toolkit: Strategies to Defeat Asian American Racial Profiling and Xenophobia (OCA)
- The Office of Equity shares many ANHPI resources, both local and national.
- U.S. Census AAPI Data

In your communities:

- Pride Asia Fest 2022: LBGTQ+ API celebration, Sunday, May 29, 2022, 12-4 p.m., FREE
- Visit Seattle: Things to do, local shopping, and restaurants.
- Events and education at the Asia Pacific Cultural Center.
- Asian Americans Advancing Justice: Know your Rights
- Watch a Webinar Series.
- Contribute to the AAPI Heritage Month video & photo contest!