



By The Office of Equal Opportunity

Each month, the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) looks forward to providing content that celebrates the diversity across our state's workforce and embraces the differences that help make us better together. We believe diversity and inclusion are everyone's responsibility and we hope all state employees carry such responsibility with honor, courage, and passion. Check us out [here](#)!



May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

This is a time to embrace and pay tribute to the many generations of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans who have helped shape our country and state.

Why is Asian Heritage Month in May? 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, (Congress et al.). The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

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), (Congress et al.).

The Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) has announced the National 2023 theme for the observance of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May as: "Advancing Leaders through Opportunity". This year's theme is a continuation of the "Advancing Leaders" theme series which began in 2021.

A new exhibit celebrating Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month opened at the Missouri State Museum in 2022. The exhibit provides information about the history of the observance and explores the contributions of Asian and Pacific Americans to the United States. The display covers relevant topics such as food, people, geographic locations, cultural celebrations, agricultural roots and military service.

In honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, please join us **May 2nd at 2pm** for the State of Missouri's Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Celebration where we celebrate and honor the contributions made by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. More information will be sent leading up to this date.

Contact us if you have ideas on diverse groups to celebrate at CelebrateDiversity@oa.mo.gov.