



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

APR 13 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Department of Defense 2017 Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Observance

The Department of Defense (DoD) joins the Nation in celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month during the month of May. AAPI Heritage Month is observed each year from May 1 – 31. The 2017 theme chosen by the Federal Asian Pacific American Council is *Unite Our Voices by Speaking Together*.

Asian Americans' ancestral origins span from East Asia and Southeast Asia, to the Indian subcontinent. Pacific Islanders have origins in Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. Representing nearly 50 countries; 23 distinct Asian American groups; 19 distinct Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander groups; and speaking over 100 languages and dialects, AAPIs account for over 20 million of the U.S. population.

AAPIs have served honorably in the United States military in every war since the War of 1812 and continue to serve our Nation admirably today. Presently, there are nearly 116,000 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders serving in the military and as civilians in DoD's Total Force. DoD recognizes the tremendous contributions of AAPIs to both the Nation and the DoD mission and is grateful for their unselfish service in securing and protecting our great Nation.

DoD Components are encouraged to recognize Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Mr. Norvel Dillard is the DoD point of contact for this observance and can be reached at (703) 614-3397, or norvel.l.dillard.civ@mail.mil.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. M. Kurta".

A. M. Kurta
Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of
Defense for Personnel and Readiness

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