

**PRESS RELEASE FROM
LEGISLATOR LESLIE KENNEDY**



**12TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LESLIE KENNEDY CELEBRATES THE ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

May 9, 2015-Legislator Leslie Kennedy celebrated Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month this weekend at the Suffolk County Asian American Advisory Board Event held at the Wang Center at Stony Brook & the Taiwanese American Art Exhibit at the Nesconset Branch of the Smithtown Library .

May is Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month – a celebration of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. 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).

The Seventh Annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration was organized by Suffolk County Asian American Advisory Board; Suffolk County Office of Minority Affairs, Charles B. Wang Center and Wellbrook Foundation, Inc. In collaboration with Brookhaven National Laboratory, InvaGen Pharmaceutical, The Center for Chinese Learning at Stony Brook, Suffolk County Police Jade Society, Kerala Association of Suffolk County, Habberstad BMW, JEI Learning Center at Stony Brook, Long Island Korean United Methodist Church, MISCH Instruments, Sheraton LaGuardia East Hotel and Truth Technologies, Inc.

Like most commemorative months, Asian-Pacific Heritage Month originated in a congressional bill. In June 1977, Reps. 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.

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 more information regarding the events or upcoming events throughout Suffolk County, please contact our office at (631) 854-3735 or email us at Leslie.Kennedy@suffolkcountyny.gov. Furthermore, follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/LegislatorLeslieKennedy.