

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL

MAY 18, 2021

**Recognizing Second District Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Honorees**

Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, which originated in 1979 as Asian Pacific American Heritage Week, is an annual observance to celebrate and honor the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in the United States. The month of May was selected because it aligned with two notable moments: May 7, 1843, the arrival of the first Japanese immigrant to the United States; and May 10, 1869, the completion of the transcontinental railroad which was built largely by Chinese immigrants. The contributions of the AAPI community then, and now, are what helped to make Los Angeles County (County) the vibrant place it is today. On May 4, 2021, the Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to proclaim May 2021 as Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month in Los Angeles County.

This year, the Second Supervisorial District honors individuals and organizations that have shown us that when we lend a helping hand to our neighbors, we can inch closer to building a more equitable and just Los Angeles.

“Clean hands, warm heart, the best taste.” These were the words of Hee Sook Lee, late founder of the BCD Tofu House, a restaurant in Koreatown. Since 1996, BCD has kept its lights on through rain, shine, civil unrest, and a global pandemic to support their local community. Over the last year, they have risen to the occasion by partnering with other restaurants to provide food to our unhoused neighbors in Skid Row.

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MOTION

MITCHELL \_\_\_\_\_

KUEHL \_\_\_\_\_

HAHN \_\_\_\_\_

BARGER \_\_\_\_\_

SOLIS \_\_\_\_\_

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Additionally, they have worked with local non-profit organizations to provide much needed meals to seniors and low-income residents they serve.

The Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI), incorporated in 1967, has led and supported the expansion of programming and services for the growing population of its Japanese-speaking community members in the South Bay. With over 30 organizations and their programming housed there, the GVJCI also organizes and sponsors an annual Day of Remembrance event to ensure that this period of mass removal and incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II is never forgotten, especially in our continued fight against social and racial injustices.

Through his involvement with the API Forward Movement, and as President of UCLA's Pacific Islands' Student Association, Phil Timoteo is committed to ensuring members of the AAPI community have access to nutritious food and quality healthcare. His work is focused on providing guidance and assistance to Pacific Islander Angelenos as they navigate the CalFresh application process and food deserts in the County. He dreams of one day becoming a doctor to serve his community.

Alex Cainglet has been an active member of the community since his arrival in the United States. His leadership as part of organizations like the Pilipino Alliance Organization and the Philippine Independence Day Foundation Annual Celebration have been critical to ensuring that the Filipino community's contributions are commemorated annually in Southern California. Most recently, he helped organize the Stop Asian Hate rally in Carson, home to one of the largest hubs of Filipino community members in the country.

For more than a year, the AAPI community has been subjected to unjustified and fatal racism and discrimination. Manju Kulkarni co-founded Stop AAPI Hate in March 2020, and since then it has been the nation's leading aggregator of COVID-19-related hate incidents against the AAPI community. Earlier this year, Manju was able to use the data collected to testify before Congress and share policy recommendations to address the current wave of racism faced by AAPIs in the United States.

Despite the challenges faced by the AAPI community, these community leaders and organizations have stepped up again and again, to support our most vulnerable

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populations. Their unwavering dedication to strengthening our communities and building a better Los Angeles is something that all Angelenos should be inspired by and aspire us to do as well.

**I THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. In honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month in Los Angeles County, (County) acknowledge and recognize the contributions of BCD Tofu House, Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute, Alex Cainglet, Phil Timoteo, and Manju Kulkarni, for their unshakeable commitment to uplifting and empowering the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community in the Second Supervisorial District.
2. Remind all County residents to take a stand against AAPI violence and racism by visiting [StopAAPIHate.org](http://StopAAPIHate.org) to learn more about how they can best support members of the AAPI community.
3. Encourage all County residents to learn more about AAPI heritage by accessing resources available through the County's Public Library and other library systems, as well as [AsianPacificHeritage.gov](http://AsianPacificHeritage.gov).

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