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To: All OR/WA Employees

From: State Director

Subject: Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, 2003

The month of May is designated as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. This year's theme is: "Salute to Liberty". America is strengthened by the rich cultural diversity of our people, and we are blessed to be a Nation that welcomes individuals of all races, religions, and cultural backgrounds. The values and traditions of the Asian/Pacific American community - - love of family, entrepreneurship, excellence in education, and community service - - have strengthened us as a Nation. We celebrate the cultural traditions, ancestry, native languages, and unique experiences of more than 30 ethnic groups from Asia and the Pacific found here in the United States. Further, we celebrate the contributions of these talented and hard-working citizens and recognize their rich legacy of ingenuity, perseverance, and achievement.

Many Asian/Pacific immigrants came to America to discover the promise of our Nation and to realize their dreams. Their contributions were critical in establishing a robust economy. Asian/Pacific Americans also worked tirelessly to build our national railroad infrastructure, paving the way for our western expansion and growth as a world leader. Generations of Asian/Pacific Americans have proudly served our Nation with honor and courage in wars and conflicts, including most recently in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Today, as in the past, their dedication and service to advancing peace in a troubled world upholds the values that make our country strong.

Asian/Pacific Americans are also helping to shape America’s future. As entrepreneurs, artists, educators, public servants, scientists, and explorers, they challenge the minds of our next generation, expand commerce and innovation, probe the frontiers of space, and search for cures for the world’s diseases. Our children are also inspired by the contributions and sacrifices of dedicated individuals such as inventor An Wang, experimental physicist Chien-Shiung Wu, Challenger astronaut Ellison Onizuka, Columbia astronaut Kalpana Chawla, and sculptor Isamu Noguchi.

Since the earliest days of America, people from all cultures have traveled to our Nation seeking the promise of freedom, opportunity, and justice. As an integral part of our society, Americans of Asian/Pacific heritage share in the pursuit of this American Dream. They are one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the United States. Let us celebrate this rich and diverse culture, for their remarkable role in our Nation’s development.

This year there are no BLM structured activities planned, however, you may consult your local newspapers for
activities planned in your community. Managers and supervisors are encouraged to allow employees to participate in ceremonies and activities in observance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month.

**Districts with Unions** are reminded to notify their unions of this IB and satisfy any bargaining obligations before implementation. Your servicing Human Resources Office or Labor Relations Specialist can provide you assistance in this matter.

Signed by
Cathy L. Harris
Acting, Associate State Director

Authenticated by
Mary O'Leary
Management Assistant

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