

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month: May 2008

In 1978, a joint congressional resolution established Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week. The first 10 days of May were chosen to coincide with two important milestones in Asian/Pacific American history: the arrival in the United States of the first Japanese immigrants (May 7, 1843) and contributions of Chinese workers to the building of the transcontinental railroad, completed on May 10, 1869. In 1992, Congress expanded the observance to a monthlong celebration. Per a 1997 Office of Management and Budget directive, the Asian or Pacific Islander racial category was separated into two categories: Asian and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. Thus, this Facts for Features contains a section for each.



Courtesy of National Institutes of Health

Asians

14.9 million

The estimated number of U.S. residents in July 2006 who said they were Asian alone or Asian in combination with one or more other races. This group comprised about 5 percent of the total population.

Source: [Population estimates](#)

5 million

The Asian population in California, the state that had the largest Asian population (either alone or in combination with one or more other races) on July 1, 2006, as well as the largest numerical increase from 2005 to 2006 (114,000). New York (1.4 million) and Texas (882,000) followed in population. Texas (43,000) and New York (34,000) followed in numerical increase. In Hawaii, Asians made up the highest proportion of the total population (56 percent), with California (14 percent) and New Jersey and Washington (8 percent each) next.

Source: [Population estimates](#)

3.2%

Percentage growth of the Asian population (either alone or in combination with one or more other races) between 2005 and 2006, the highest of any race group during that time period. The increase in the Asian population during the period totaled 460,000.

Source: [Population estimates](#)

3.6 million

Number of Asians of Chinese descent in the U.S. Chinese-Americans are the largest Asian group, followed by Filipinos (2.9 million), Asian Indians (2.7 million), Vietnamese (1.6 million), Koreans (1.5 million) and

Japanese (1.2 million). These estimates represent the number of people who are either of a particular Asian group only or are of that group in combination with one or more other Asian groups or races.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)



Courtesy of Hongtimvo/Flickr.com

Education

49%

The percentage of single-race Asians 25 and older who have a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. This compares with 27 percent for all Americans 25 and older.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

86%

The percentage of single-race Asians 25 and older who have at least a high school diploma. This compares with 84 percent for all Americans 25 and older.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

20%

The percentage of single-race Asians 25 and older who have a graduate (e.g., master's or doctorate) or professional degree. This compares with 10 percent for all Americans 25 and older.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

The Asian population comprises many groups who differ in languages spoken and culture, which is reflected in the demographic characteristics of these groups. For instance, 69 percent of Asian Indians 25 and older had a bachelor's degree or more education, and 36 percent had a graduate or professional degree. The corresponding numbers for Vietnamese-Americans were 26 percent and 7 percent, respectively. (These figures represent the single-race population. The percentage of Vietnamese-Americans who had a bachelor's degree or higher was not significantly different from 27 percent, the percentage for all Americans.)

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

\$64,238

Median household income for single-race Asians in 2006, the highest among all race groups.

Source: [Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2006](#)

Median household income differed greatly by Asian group. For Asian Indians, for example, the median income in 2006 was \$78,315; for Vietnamese-Americans, it was \$52,299. (These figures represent the single-race population.)

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

10.3%

Poverty rate for single-race Asians in 2006, statistically unchanged from 2005.

Source: [Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2006](#)

15.5%

Percentage of single-race Asians without health insurance coverage in 2006, down from 17.2 percent in 2005.

Source: [Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2006](#)

Businesses

Source for the statements referenced in this section, unless otherwise indicated: [Asian-Owned Firms: 2002](#).

1.1 million

Number of businesses owned by Asian-Americans in 2002, up 24 percent from 1997. The rate of increase in the number of Asian-owned businesses was about twice that of the national average for all businesses.

More than \$326 billion

Receipts of Asian-American-owned businesses in 2002, up 8 percent from 1997. An estimated 319,468 Asian-owned businesses had paid employees, and their receipts totaled more than \$291 billion. There were 49,636 Asian-owned firms with receipts of \$1 million or more, accounting for 4.5 percent of the total number of Asian-owned firms and nearly 68 percent of their total receipts.



Courtesy of Paul McRae/Flickr.com

In 2002, more than three in 10 Asian-owned firms operated in professional, scientific and technical services, as well as other services, such as personal services, and repair and maintenance.

2.2 million

Number of people employed by an Asian-owned business. There were 1,866 Asian-owned firms with 100 or more employees, generating nearly \$52 billion in gross receipts (18 percent of the total revenue for Asian-owned employer firms).

46%

Percentage of all Asian-owned firms that was either Chinese owned or Asian Indian owned.

Nearly 6 in 10

Proportion of all Asian-owned firms in the United States in California, New York, Texas and New Jersey.

112,441

The number of Asian-owned firms in New York, which led all cities. Los Angeles (47,764), Honolulu (22,348) and San Francisco (19,639) followed.

28%

Proportion of Asian-owned businesses that responded to the 2002 Survey of Business Owners that they were home based. This is the lowest proportion among minority respondent groups.

Source: [Characteristics of Businesses: 2002](#)

Languages

2.5 million

The number of people 5 and older who speak Chinese at home. After Spanish, Chinese is the most widely spoken non-English language in the country. Tagalog, Vietnamese and Korean are each spoken at home by more than 1 million people.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)



Courtesy of Kirks Gallery/Flickr.com

Serving Our Nation

292,100

The number of single-race Asian military veterans. About one in three was 65 and older.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

Jobs

47%

The proportion of civilian employed single-race Asians 16 and older who work in management, professional and related occupations, such as financial managers, engineers, teachers and registered nurses. Additionally, 23 percent work in sales and office occupations, 16 percent in service occupations and 10 percent in production, transportation and material moving occupations.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

Counties

1.4 million

The number of Asians (alone or in combination with one or more other races) in Los Angeles County, Calif., in 2006, which tops the nation's counties. Santa Clara County, Calif. (home of San Jose) was the runner-up (556,000).

Source: [Population estimates](#)

17,600

Santa Clara County's Asian population increase from 2005 to 2006, the largest in the nation. Los Angeles (15,700) followed.

Source: [Population estimates](#)

59%

Percent of the population of Honolulu County, Hawaii, that was Asian in 2006, which led the country. One other county — Kauai, Hawaii — was also majority Asian. San Francisco County, Calif., led the continental United States, with 34 percent of its population Asian.

Source: [Population estimates](#)

Age Distribution

35.2

Median age, of the single-race Asian population in 2006. The corresponding figure is 36.4 years for the population as a whole.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

The Future

33.4 million

The projected number of U.S. residents in 2050 who will identify themselves as single-race Asians. They would comprise 8 percent of the total population by that year.

Source: [Population projections](#)

213%

The projected percentage increase between 2000 and 2050 in the population of people who identify themselves as single-race Asian. This compares with a 49 percent increase in the population as a whole over the same period of time.

Source: [Population projections](#)

Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders

1 million

The estimated number of U.S. residents in July 2006 who said they are Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, either alone or in combination with one or more other races.

This group comprised 0.3 percent of the total population.

Source: [Population estimates](#)

Hawaii had the largest population (275,000) in 2006 of Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders (either alone or in combination with one or more other races), followed by California (260,000) and Washington (49,000). California had the largest numerical increase (3,400) of people of this group, with Texas (2,000) and Florida (1,500) next. In Hawaii, Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders comprised the largest proportion (21 percent) of the total population, followed by Utah (1 percent) and Alaska (0.9 percent).

Source: [Population estimates](#)

1.7%

Percentage growth of the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population (either alone or in combination with one or more other races) between 2005 and 2006, the highest of any race group except for Asians.

Source: [Population estimates](#)



U.S. Census Bureau



Courtesy of Nationalcapacd/Flickr.com

Education

14%

The percentage of single-race Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders 25 and older who have at least a bachelor's degree. This compares with 27 percent for the total population.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

84%

The percentage of single-race Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders 25 and older who have at least a high school diploma. This matches the corresponding percentage for the total population.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

4%

The percentage of single-race Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders 25 and older who have obtained a graduate or professional degree. This compares with 10 percent for the total population this age.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

Income, Poverty and Health Insurance

\$49,361

The median income of households headed by single-race Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander but did not report any other race.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

11.4%

The three-year average (2004-2006) poverty rate for those who reported their race as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders.

Source: [Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2006 unpublished](#)

21.7%

The three-year average (2004-2006) percentage without health insurance single-race Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders.

Source: [Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2006](#)

Businesses

Source for the statements referenced in this section: [Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-Owned Firms: 2002](#).

28,948

Number of Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned businesses in 2002, up 49 percent from 1997. The rate of growth was more than three times the national average. The 3,693 Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned businesses with a payroll employed more than 29,000 and generated revenues of \$3.5 billion.

2,415

Number of Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned firms in Honolulu, the most of any city in the nation.

\$4.3 billion

Receipts for Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned businesses in 2002, up 3 percent from 1997. There were 727 Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned firms with receipts of \$1 million or more. These firms accounted for 2.5 percent of the total number of Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned firms and 66.8 percent of their total receipts.



Courtesy of Gamma Infinity/Flickr.com

In 2002, nearly 21,000 Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned firms operated in health care and social assistance; other services (such as personal services, and repair and maintenance); retail trade; administrative and support, and waste management and remediation services; professional, scientific and technical services; and construction.

28

Number of Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned firms with 100 or more employees. These firms generated \$698 million in gross receipts —19.9 percent of the total revenue for Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned employer firms.

53%

Percentage of all Native Hawaiian- and Other Pacific Islander-owned firms in Hawaii and California. These two states accounted for 62 percent of business revenue.

Serving Our Nation

27,700

The number of single-race Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander military veterans. About one in six was 65 and older.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

Jobs

20%

The proportion of civilian employed single-race Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders 16 and older who work in management, professional and related occupations, such as financial managers, engineers, teachers and registered nurses. Meanwhile, 28 percent work in sales and office occupations, 23 percent in service occupations and 16 percent in production, transportation and material moving occupations.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

Counties

177,000

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population (alone or in combination with one or more other races) in Honolulu County, Hawaii, in 2006, which led the nation. Los Angeles County, Calif., (59,000) was second. Hawaii County, Hawaii, and Clark County, Nev. (home of Las Vegas) had the largest numerical increases in this race since July 2005, around 900. Hawaii County had the highest percentage of people of this race: 29 percent.

Source: [Population estimates](#)

Age Distribution

29.9

The median age of the single-race Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population in 2006. The median age was 36.4 for the population as a whole.

Source: [2006 American Community Survey](#)

A list of observances covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series in 2007:

African-American History Month (February)	Back to School (August)
Super Bowl XLII (Feb. 3)	Labor Day (Sept. 1)
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Grandparents Day (Sept. 7)
Women's History Month (March)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week (Sept. 21-27)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Older Americans Month (May)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Cinco de Mayo (May 5)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Mother's Day (May 11)	Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 27)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	The Holiday Season (December)
Father's Day (June 15)	
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. *Facts for Features* are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: pio@census.gov.