Upcoming Events
May 2022

AANHPI Heritage Month
Jewish American Heritage Month
Mental Health Awareness Month
Older Americans Month
Public Service Recognition Week
May 1–7

Military Spouse Appreciation Day
May 6

National Nurses Week
May 6–12

Mother’s Day
May 8

Women’s Health Week
May 8-14

Armed Forces Day
May 21

Memorial Day
May 30

Commemorate
Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month

This May, VA joins the Nation in observing Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month and recognizing AANHPI history, achievements, and diversity of contributions that enrich America’s culture and society. This year’s theme, as established by the Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC), is “Advancing Leaders Through Collaboration.”

As of March 2022, AANHPIs represent 4.79% of the Relevant Civilian Labor Force and 9.48% of VA employees (40,082 employees). This is an increase of over 2,500 employees from fiscal year 2020. About 123,000 Veterans are employed by VA with AANHPIs consisting of 4.51% of the Veteran employee population (5,559 employees).

Join the VA Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Chapter on May 26, 2022, from noon to 1:00 pm (ET) in commemorating AANHPI Heritage Month. Ms. Lourdes Tiglao, Executive Director, Center for Women Veterans, will provide opening remarks and speakers will include Mr. David Sloniker, Executive Director, VA Logistics Redesign, and Lieutenant Colonel Anh Tran. In addition, there will be a live cooking demonstration by Chef Ippy Aiona of Ippy’s Hawaiian Barbeque Restaurant, Big Island of Hawai‘i. For more information about this event or to request an accommodation, contact Ms. Bridget Souza, VA FAPAC Chapter President. For more information on VA’s AANHPI Special Emphasis Program (SEP), contact Ms. Yvonne Rannels, VA’s Departmental AANHPI SEP Manager, ORMDI.

ORMDI
Steps Toward Conflict Resolution

You can contact ORMDI toll-free at 1-888-566-3982 (TDD/TTY, dial 711 and before providing this number) and speak with a specialist regarding equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaint processing, Alternative Dispute Resolution, or harassment prevention. You must initiate contact with an EEO counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged act of discrimination by calling 1-888-566-3982 or visiting your local ORMDI Field Office. The harassment prevention procedures do not affect rights under the EEO complaint process. Harassment should be reported immediately to a manager or supervisor, Harassment Prevention Coordinator, or the Harassment Prevention Program.
Greetings! I am excited to share news about the release of various publications which would be of interest to you. First is VA’s Equity Action Plan, part of VA’s Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, & Access or I-DEA Action Plan that was published at the end of last fiscal year. I hope you are able to take the opportunity to review both of these important documents if you haven’t already.

ORMDI also recently published VA Handbook 5979, Harassment Prevention Program (HPP) Procedures, and VA Handbook 5975.1, Processing Requests for Reasonable Accommodation and Personal Assistance for Employees and Applicants with Disabilities. Both of these documents address important processes and procedures.

Finally, spring reminds us that Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW) is just around the corner. PSRW is an annual celebration held the first full week of May to honor the country’s federal, state, county, and local government employees for their contributions to public service. During PSRW, VA celebrates and honors its public servants for their dedication in fulfilling VA’s mission of caring for our Nation’s Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

This year, from May 1-7, 2022, VA facilities across the Nation will take part in virtual events that salute and enrich our workforce. VA employees can look forward to various activities that encourage time to reflect, opportunities to connect with fellow colleagues, de-stress, and get moving! See below for the week of events at-a-glance.

Monday, May 2, is Appreciation Day. The featured event is called “Kindness Quest,” a self-guided, interactive activity where VA employees set out to show a little kindness/appreciation to fellow colleagues and volunteers. Also, don’t forget to visit the PSRW Celebration Hub to access your PSRW 2022 Appreciation Day Certificate!

Tuesday, May 3, is Reflection Day. The featured event is called “Thoughts for Tomorrow,” a self-guided activity where employees are invited to take a moment out of their busy day to reflect/connect with themselves and others. Short reflection prompts will be provided and range from career, life, and more! Get those affirmations ready!

Wednesday, May 4, is Wellness Day. Today employees can participate in various activities that focus on mental and physical wellness. Activities are divided into morning, midday, and evening sessions. Note: All sessions were pre-recorded and are available on the PSRW Celebration Hub. Employees can enjoy these activities as their schedule permits.

Thursday, May 5, is Community Day. Employees can participate in the virtual “2022 PSRW Walk” wherever they reside. Though we are located in different places across the country, we are still ONE VA. Invite a teammate, or rally up your whole team, and head outside (weather permitting). Other activity options are available.

Friday, May 6, is Gallery Day. During the month of April, ORMDI collected photos, pieces of creative writing, digital depictions of paintings, drawings, sculptures, or other works of art from employees for the VArt Challenge. Please take a moment before your workday ends to visit the virtual VArt Gallery on the PSRW Celebration Hub.

To participate in any of the events mentioned, visit the “PSRW Daily Events” section on the PSRW Celebration Hub. Activity guides are available from your local PSRW point of contact for anyone unable to access the PSRW Celebration Hub during the week. A video summarizing the week of events and my PSRW video message are also available.

Have a great Public Service Recognition Week! Thank you for your service.
Veterans Program

The Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC), in partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs, is hosting workshops on Veterans benefits, services, and employment. Veterans, Active Duty Personnel, and their families are invited to attend. Attendees will have all-day access to the Exhibitor Booths (9:00am – 5:00pm), workshops, and networking opportunities throughout the day. Register for this FREE event today.

When:       Wednesday, May 11, 2022
Time:       12:00pm - 3:30pm
Where:      Virtual
Register:   www.fapac.org/veterans2022

Questions? Contact nltp@fapac.org.
Training

Federal Asian Pacific American Council National Leadership Training Program

The Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) 37th National Leadership Training Program (NLTP) will be held virtually May 10-12, 2022. The NLTP attracts hundreds of attendees across the Federal, State and DC governments and the Uniformed Services annually. Participants learn from the experiences of senior government officials and subject matter experts through workshops on career advancement, leadership, effective communications, diversity, and inclusion. The NLTP also offers free programs and a career exhibition to connect students and Military Veterans with potential employers and broaden their professional networks. The NLTP aligns with the Office of Personnel Management requirements as an appropriate training for Federal workforce in accordance with 5 U.S.C. Chapter 41 and 5 CFR 410.404.

Costs associated with attending must be authorized by each employee’s organization. No centralized funding is available to pay for registration. Employees who plan to attend the FAPAC NLTP should follow appropriate conference attendance approval procedures established for their respective organizations. For additional information, contact Ms. Yvonne Rannels, VA’s Departmental Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Special Emphasis Program Manager, Office of Resolution Management, Diversity and Inclusion.

The FAPAC NLTP, in partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs, is hosting virtual workshops on Veteran services and employment on Wednesday, May 11, 2022, from noon to 3:30 p.m. Veterans, Active Duty Personnel, and their families are invited to attend. Attendees will have all-day access to the Exhibitor Booths (9:00am – 5:00pm), workshops, and networking opportunities throughout the day. Register for this FREE virtual event by visiting the FAPAC NLTP Veterans Program.

The Audacity to Fail Podcast

The Audacity to Fail Podcast: misStepping Into Success focuses on discovering leadership wisdom through experiences with failures and missteps. The podcast features conversations and stories from VA leaders as they share how failure activates a growth mindset, is an important part of learning and provides motivation for improvement. On the April episode, On this episode, Dr. Shari Dade takes a moment to connect with Dr. Shabnam “Shabi” Showell, an Associate Chief of Staff of primary care West at the North Florida South Georgia Health Care System, and a leadership coach. Listen in for a discussion on how the fear of missteps and not trusting yourself as a leader can lead to failing before you even begin the journey. The series is also available on the Talent Management System.

Commemorate

Jewish American Heritage Month

VA joins the Nation in observing Jewish American Heritage Month this May. From the Presidential Proclamation on Jewish American Heritage Month, 2021:

The Jewish American experience is a story of faith, fortitude, and progress. It is a quintessential American experience — one that is connected to key tenets of American identity, including our Nation’s commitment to freedom of religion and conscience. This month, we honor Jewish Americans — past and present — who have inextricably woven their experience and their accomplishments into the fabric of our national identity...

A central concept in Judaism, “l’dor v’ador”, or “from generation to generation,” recognizes both the continuity of the Jewish people and the intergenerational responsibility we have to heal the world for our children. During Jewish American Heritage Month, we honor Jewish Americans, who, inspired by Jewish values and American ideals, have engaged in the ongoing work of forming a more perfect union.