

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Dr. Jim Yih-Jin Young

Chairman
Asian American Advisory Board

Rev. Roderick A. Pearson

Executive Director
Office of Minority Affairs

May 9, 2015

Dear Friends,

It is my honor and pleasure that I welcome everybody to our 7th Annual Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Celebration at the Charles B. Wang Center.

Our event theme this year is "*One World, Many Cultures*" and our today's affair is a reflection of successful year of the Suffolk County Executive's Asian American Advisory Board (AAAB). The Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (AAPI), officially proclaimed "Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month" by President Barack Obama, is a celebration of the culture, traditions, and history of Asians Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States. Congress passed a joint Congressional Resolution in 1978 to commemorate Asian American Heritage Week during the first week of May.

The Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month is celebrated in the month of May because two important anniversaries occurred during this time: the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants in America on May 7, 1843 and the completion of the transcontinental railroad (by many Chinese laborers) on May 10, 1869. It was later expanded from a week long to a month long celebration in 1990. Asian Pacific Americans have made countless contributions in many aspects of American life including, but not limited to the arts and sciences, government, education, sports, healthcare, business and military service.

As we celebrate the Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month we are reminded of the various accomplishments of Asian Pacific Americans here in the United States and today, the Suffolk County Executive's AAAB will recognize Asian Pacific American Distinguished Honorees who helped promote Asian-American cultural awareness; who have contributed significantly to the Asian American community and recognizing Asian American charitable organizations and highly accomplished Asian American professionals.

I would like to thank this year's 2015 Overall Chairman, Jim Young, Ph.D. and along with all the 2015 AAPI Overall Committee Chairman, Mohammed Rahman plus all the committee chairs and volunteers who have given tremendous dedication and have done a wonderful job in the past several months of planning and organizing. I would also like to thank Wellbrook Foundation, Inc and the Suffolk County Office of Minority Affairs plus all our co-sponsors including Brookhaven National Laboratory, InvaGen Pharmaceutical, Suffolk County Police Asian Jade Society and Charles B. Wang Center for all their support in making this event possible.

Best wishes to everyone and I hope you will enjoy our festivities. Mabuhay!

Sincerely,

Ramon. Villongco, M.B.A
Emeritus Chairman