

Fun Facts: Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

The Start of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Congress in 1978 passed a resolution creating Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week. It expanded the observance to a month (May) in 1992, timed to coincide with two important milestones in Asian/Pacific American history: arrival of the first Japanese immigrants in the United States (May 7, 1843) and completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869 (the majority of workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants).



What's the Age?

Roughly 37—Median age of the Asian population in the U.S. in 2020.

Asian-Owned Businesses

About 1 out of 10 or 581,200 or 10%

The estimated number of Asian-owned businesses in the U.S. in 2019. (This number only represents employer businesses.)



Occupations

The top Asian alone occupations in the U.S. in 2018:

- Management, Business, Science and Arts - **5,034,000**
- Sales and Office - **1,699,000**
- Service - **1,549,000**
- Production, Transportation, and Material Moving - **946,800**
- Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance - **258,600**

5.1 million—The estimated number of the Asian population of Chinese, except Taiwanese, descent in the U.S. in 2020. The Chinese (except Taiwanese) population was the largest Asian group in the U.S., followed by:

- Asian Indian - **4.5 million**
- Filipino - **4.1 million**
- Vietnamese - **2.2 million**
- Korean - **1.9 million**
- Japanese - **1.6 million**



Note: These estimates represent the number of people who reported a specific detailed Asian group alone, as well as those who reported that detailed Asian group in combination with one or more other Asian groups or race(s).

Educational Attainment

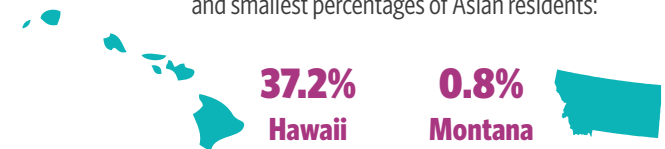
Over half (55.6%)—The percentage of the Asian alone population age 25 and older who had a bachelor's degree or higher level of education in 2019.

Almost 9 out 10 (87.8%)—The percentage of the Asian alone population age 25 and older who had at least a high school diploma or equivalency in 2019.



Total Asian Alone Population

About 6% or 20 million—The number of Asians in the U.S. in 2020. These states had the largest and smallest percentages of Asian residents:



Birthplace Populations of Famous Asian Americans

Hiram Fong - Honolulu, Hawaii (Pop. - **1,016,508**)
Businessman and lawyer, was the first Chinese American and first Asian American elected to the U.S. Senate, where he served from 1959 to 1977.

Connie Chung - Washington, DC (Pop. - **689,545**)
First Asian American of Chinese descent and the second woman to anchor a nightly newscast at a major U.S. broadcast network.

Sammy Lee - Fresno, California (Pop. - **542,107**)
First Asian American man of Korean descent to win an Olympic gold medal for the U.S. and the first man to win consecutive gold medals in Olympic platform diving.

Vanessa Anne Hudgens - Salinas, California (Pop. - **163,542**)
An American actress and singer of Filipino descent.

James Vo "Jim" Parque - Norwalk, CA (Pop. - **102,773**)
A former Major League Baseball pitcher (Chicago White Sox) of Vietnamese descent.

Wataru "Wat" Misaka - Ogden, UT (Pop. - **87,321**)
Asian American point guard of Japanese descent, who broke the color barrier in pro basketball by becoming the first nonwhite player and the first player of Asian descent to play in the NBA.

Note: All data other than business and birthplace stats on this page are for Asian American alone or in combination with other races.

Sources: data.census.gov; <www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2021/asian-american-pacific-islander.html>; 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates; 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates; 2020 Annual Business Survey, data year 2019; Detailed Occupations by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2018 ACS; <history.house.gov/People>; <https://biography.yourdictionary.com>; <www.britannica.com>; <https://celebsanswers.com/is-vanessa-hudgens-hispanic/>; <https://historyofyesterday.com>; and <https://vietceleb.blogspot.com/2016/03/jim-parque.html>.

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Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (NHPI) Facts

Total Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone Population

Less than one percent or about 690 thousand—The number of NHPI residents in the U.S. in 2020.

Hawaii (10.8%)—The state with the nation's largest share of NHPI alone population.



607,010—The number of Native Hawaiian residents in the U.S. in 2020. The Native Hawaiian population was the largest detailed NHPI group in the U.S., followed by:

- Samoan - **211,876**
- Guamanian or Chamorro - **156,083**

Note: These estimates represent the number of people who reported a specific detailed NHPI group alone, as well as those who reported that detailed NHPI group in combination with one or more other NHPI groups or other race(s).

Birthplace Populations of Famous NHPI Americans

David "Daddy" Kaonohiokala Bray - Honolulu, Hawaii (Pop. - **1,016,508**)
Hula master credited for saving the traditional art of hula from extinction. He worked as a Hawaiian language translator and special agent for the 1910 Census.

Jerry "J Boog" Afemata - Long Beach, California (Pop. - **466,742**)
Singer of Samoan ancestry who fuses reggae with R&B, hip-hop, and rock.

Eddie Aikau - Kahului, Hawaii (Pop. - **28,219**)
Champion surfer of Hawaiian descent and first lifeguard at Waimea Bay credited with saving more than 500 lives.

Wilhelmina Kekelaokalaninui Widemann Dowsett - Lihue, Hawaii (Pop. - **8,004**)
A Native Hawaiian suffragist who helped found the first women's suffrage club in what was then the Territory of Hawaii in 1912. Before 1920, women did not have the right to vote in the United States and the suffragists were people who fought for those rights.

Isabella Aiona Abbot - Hana, Maui County, Hawaii (Pop. - **2,719**)
First Native Hawaiian woman to earn a doctoral degree in the field of science.

John Waihee - Honokaa, Hawaii (Pop. - **2,699**)
Hawaii's first elected governor (in 1986) of Hawaiian ancestry.



NHPI-Owned Businesses

About 1 out of 1000 or 7,331 or 0.1%—The estimated number of NHPI-owned businesses in the U.S. in 2019. (This number only represents employer businesses.)

Occupations

The top NHPI occupations in the U.S. in 2018:

- Management, Business, Science and Arts - **75,970**
- Service - **61,260**
- Sales and Office - **59,920**
- Production, Transportation, and Material Moving - **51,800**
- Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance - **21,530**



What's the Age?

Roughly 32—Median age of the NHPI population in the U.S. in 2020.

Educational Attainment



Almost 2 out of 10 (18.1%)—The percentage of the NHPI alone population age 25 and older who had a bachelor's degree or higher level of education in 2019.

Almost 9 out of 10 (86.3%)—The percentage of the NHPI alone population age 25 and older who had at least a high school diploma or equivalency in 2019.

Note: All data other than business and birthplace stats on this page are for Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone or in combination with other races.

Source: data.census.gov; <www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2021/asian-american-pacific-islander.html>; 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates; 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates; 2020 Annual Business Survey, data year 2019; Detailed Occupations by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2018 ACS; davidbray542017.pdf (census.gov); <www.allmusic.com>; <www.surfertoday.com>; <www.nps.gov>; <https://maui.hawaii.edu>; <www.nga.org> and <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_D._Waihee%CA%BBE_III>.