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U.S. ARMY MANEUVER CENTER OF EXCELLENCE



## **MCoE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**

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## **MEDIA RELEASE: Fort Benning to observe Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month Thursday**

**FORT BENNING, Ga.** – The Fort Benning community will celebrate and observe Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., Thursday in Derby Auditorium, McGinnis Wickam Hall.

The event recognizes the achievements and history of Asian Pacific Americans with the theme, “Asian Pacific Contributions to our Army.”

The guest speaker is Lt. Col. Oscar Diano, commander of the 2nd Squadron, 16th Cavalry Regiment.

“Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders have a rich history within the United States and the Army,” said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Deiterning, of the Maneuver Center of Excellence Equal Opportunity Office. “These ethnic observances enhance cross-cultural awareness among the Soldiers, civilian employees and their Families.”

Asian Pacific heritage recognizes “all of the Asian continent and the Pacific islands of Melanesia (New Guinea, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji and the Solomon Islands), Micronesia (Marianas, Guam, Wake Island, Palau, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Nauru and the Federated States of Micronesia) and Polynesia (New Zealand, Hawaiian Islands, Rotuma, Midway Islands, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, French Polynesia and Easter Island),” according to the Asian Pacific Heritage government website.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month began in 1977 with the introduction of a House bill from Reps. Frank Horton of New York and Norman Y. Mineta of California, who wanted to dedicate the first 10 days of May to Asian Pacific American Heritage. In 1990, under President George H. W. Bush, the entire month of May was dedicated to observing the heritage, according to the website.

May was chosen to commemorate the first Japanese immigrants to come to the U.S. in May 1843 and also to mark the anniversary of the transcontinental railroad in May 1869, which was completed by mostly Chinese immigrants.

**Media pick up time is 10:30 a.m. Thursday at the Benning Road gate. Media interested attending the event must call the Public Affairs Office at 706-545-2237 or 706-604-0468.**

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*The Maneuver Center of Excellence, activated in October 2009, includes the Armor and Infantry schools plus their subordinate training brigades. As such, it's the hub for the Army's new Infantry-Armor alliance. Fort Benning teaches more than 180 courses ... both resident and via Mobile Training Teams at other installations in the United States and at deployed locations overseas.*

*Since relocation of the Armor School from Fort Knox in September 2011, Fort Benning has also been home to both the Armor and Infantry branches - All Armor and Infantry Soldiers start their Army journey here - from private to colonel. Fort Benning also trains 52 percent of all civilians who come into the Army through Initial Military Training. During fiscal year 2012, Fort Benning is resourced to train about 96,600 Soldiers. It is also the proponent for all Maneuver Forces.*

*The MCoE also conducts research, development and experimentation to ensure our future Army Maneuver Force is prepared and equipped to fight and win in a complex future environment. Through doctrine development, leveraging emerging technology and partnering with industry, the Maneuver Center is an advocate for the Maneuver Force.*

*Since 1918, Fort Benning has been an integral part of training our Army. Today, Fort Benning and the Maneuver Center of Excellence provide trained, agile, adaptive and ready Soldiers and leaders for our Army at war, while developing capabilities for the Maneuver Force and the individual Soldier and providing a world-class quality of life for our Soldiers, Civilians and Army Families.*

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