

June 2022

FAPAC-DOI Newsletter



U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service



Stonewall
National
Monument

In this Issue

Contributors

Ashley Chou
Barbara Green
Martin Moore
Linus Y. Chen
Thomas Liu
Kelly Kim

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President's Letter

Dear Chapter Members,

Earlier this month, our chapter had a very special meeting with Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland along with the National Park Service's Asian American Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group. We heard from employees across the Department who shared their personal and professional stories, and we received from the Secretary her warm and sincere appreciation and genuine presence. I would like to personally thank Secretary Haaland and Felicia Salazar for reaching out and organizing this extraordinary day with our ERGs – for recognizing, seeing, and hearing from the AANHPI community of DOI and beyond. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the panel for their willingness to share and for their candor, and to Brenda Ling with NPS for co-facilitating.

Each one of these humans has a story - their parents, grandparents, great-grandparents stories...and sometimes celebrating heritage means we share generations of pain, along with the triumphs. Sometimes we cry. We heal.

Not knowing when I'd ever get another chance to say it, I thanked Madam Secretary for being my role model, for giving me hope, for her heart, for her inclusion, for flying the Progress Pride flag over Main Interior, for reaching out to the AANHPI community of DOI to check in and hear our stories, for being one of the best people I could ever ask for to lead the Department of the Interior. It is such an honor.

Thank you all for being a part of it.



Lena Chang
President, FAPAC-DOI

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Ashley Chou, FAPAC-DOI Board Intern, Bureau of Ocean, Energy, Management (BOEM)



Q: How long have you been employed in the Federal government/intern/student? When did you join FAPAC-DOI?

I joined in November 2020, so I've been serving as the board intern for nearly two years now! Crazy to think that's half of my college career.

Q: What advice would you give to a new Federal employee/intern/student?

I admit it feels a little odd to be giving advice as I am much more used to receiving it at this point in my career, but here it is: be alert to the ways you can contribute and latch onto your "thing"! Then push yourself to improve. This is how the FAPAC-DOI newsletter came to be!

Q: What are some of your favorite things about being a member of FAPAC-DOI?

I have really, really loved being able to participate in the FAPAC-DOI community as part of my college experience. It has empowered me and helped me grow on a number of fronts:

First, it has given me a better understanding of what the AANHPI experience is and a stronger vocabulary for discussing it. Before I joined FAPAC-DOI, I was completely unaware of things like the bamboo ceiling, or even, I'm ashamed to say, the Pacific Islands. My opinion is that though the college environment is conducive to broadening intellectual horizons, it is ironically also very sheltered. If you don't know where to look or who to talk to, it becomes easy to stagnate in terms of personal growth (outside of the classroom). Now, I am strong in my knowledge of AANHPI issues and excited to continue learning!

Second, the FAPAC-DOI community is infused with a sense of kindness, enthusiasm, and passion that I honestly have not seen anywhere else. I can see it in our discussions at chapter meetings, in my emails with members that contribute to our newsletter, etc. It is truly inspiring!

Finally, when I first joined as a sophomore in college, I had very little prior experience with the professional world. The FAPAC-DOI board members have served as wonderful role models, shedding light on what a working life looks like, and more importantly, helping me understand what it means to be an AANHPI professional.

Q: What do you look for in a mentor? How have mentors helped you in your career and what more can mentors do to help employees on their career paths?

Given my current stage of life (i.e. haven't started working full-time yet and am in the process of figuring out post-college plans), the key traits I look for in my mentors are flexibility and lots of experience. I appreciate when someone is open to riding the ups and downs of career planning with me; it is also super helpful for me when they help identify new opportunities to explore or encourage new ways of working and thinking. This flexible mindset needs to be balanced with lots of professional experience because that gives the mentor a long term perspective which they can then share with me.



Q: How do you enjoy spending your free time? (family, cooking, movies, etc.)

I love reading! My favorite author is Kazuo Ishiguro, a Japanese British writer. I read his dystopian science fiction novel *Never Let Me Go* in my first year of high school and became obsessed with his beautiful narrative style and compelling exploration of human development/memory. Lately, I have been more interested in nonfiction. There are two books by American psychologist Jonathan Haidt that I highly recommend – *The Righteous Mind* and *The Happiness Hypothesis*. Both works have genuinely changed my world outlook and brought me some peace of mind during these (extremely) troubled times...

I am also a bit of a plant enthusiast. I currently own an orchid and two pothos plants, which I like to keep on my desk and shower with attention. During the pandemic, I did a fair amount of gardening in the backyard (tomatoes and potatoes).

Q: What else would you like FAPAC-DOI to know about you?

It has been such an honor to publish your stories, reflections, photos, and more during my time as an intern so far! Thank you so much for allowing us to share them every month. It has also been really encouraging to see you all responding to and actively engaging with the newsletter – please keep it up and help us continue to improve this project!

6 JUNE 2022

Meet N Greet with Secretary Deb Haaland!



Top to bottom, left to right: Lena Chang (FWS), Brenda Ling (NPS), ASL interpreter, Martin Moore (OIA), Anna Tamura (NPS), Karen Sinclair (FWS), Secretary Deb Haaland, Hanako Wakatsuki-Chong (NPS), Yen-Yen Chan (NPS), Cindy Lowman (FWS), Philip Lu (FWS), Vincent Nguyen (NPS), Rebecca Au (NPS), Linus Chen (DOI-SOL), Ashley Chou (BOEM intern), Janet Cushing (USGS)

Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland has been on a mission since coming into office to actively get to know her employees within the Department. The U.S. Department of the Interior spans across the globe including the United States, the U.S. Territories, and Freely Associated States with over 2,400 locations and approximately 70,000 employees! Secretary Haaland has traveled to various different National Parks and has had countless virtual meetings with a variety of Department's personnel.

On June 6th, 2022 Secretary Haaland met via Microsoft Teams with members of the FAPAC-DOI and NPS Asian American employee resource groups. Twelve DOI employees representing various DOI Bureaus and Offices across the country were invited to share about their identities, careers, and inspirations with Secretary Haaland. This was a rewarding and an incredible opportunity to meet with the first indigenous Cabinet member. Over 200 members of the DOI AANHPI community joined the live event.

[A recording of the gathering is available on Microsoft Teams](#)



Secretary of the Interior
Deb Haaland

Throughout her career in public service, Secretary Haaland has broken barriers and opened the doors of opportunity for future generations!

As a member of the Pueblo of Laguna and a 35th generation New Mexican, she made history when she became the 1st Native American woman elected to lead a state party (New Mexico, 2015-2017), one of the 1st Native American woman to serve in Congress (2019-2021), and the 1st Native American to serve as a cabinet secretary (2021-present)!



What do you know about ?

June, the month summer begins. Longer days and warmer nights for some, while for others, June is so much more than that. In recent years, we've seen June being celebrated more commonly with different multi-colored flags being flown.

What's that about? That, my friend, is what we know as PRIDE month.



PRIDE is the month where we celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community. Traditionally, PRIDE pertained to LGBT and I know we all love our acronyms, so officially:

- L** Lesbian is a woman who is attracted to other women physically, emotionally, and/or romantically
- G** Gay is anyone attracted physically, emotionally, and/or romantically to someone of the same sex
- B** Bisexual is anyone who is physically, emotionally, and/or romantically attracted to people within more than one sex, gender, or gender identity
- T** Transgender is anyone whose gender identity or expression is different than their sex assigned at birth. Transgender should be used as an adjective — not as a noun or a verb.
- Q** Queer is an umbrella term used by some people whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual or straight. This term is also relevant to anyone who have non-binary or gender-fluid identities. Q can also represent “questioning” meaning any person who is exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity
- I** Intersex can represent person(s) who is born with differences in their sex traits or reproductive anatomy that don't fit typical definitions of female or male. There may be differences in regards to genitalia, chromosomes, hormones, internal sex organs, and/or secondary sex characteristics
- A** Asexual represents anyone who lacks sexual attraction or desire for other people. It's different from celibacy, in which people make a choice to abstain from sexual activity.
- +** Plus is a symbol that represents members of the community who identify with a sexual orientation or gender identity that isn't included within the LGBTQIA acronym.

The LGBTQIA+ community is constantly growing and evolving and so is the acronym.



Now June is known and recognized as PRIDE month. PRIDE goes so much further than just rainbows and parades. There is a history behind June being PRIDE month. Do you know what that history is? If you do, amazing! If you don't, you will shortly.

In the 1960s, it was essentially a crime to be gay. Specifically in New York City, being gay was a violation of some law, rule, or policy. People could be arrested for wearing less than three pieces of clothing that didn't adhere to their biologically assigned gender. People lived secret lives riddled with fear of violent attacks and blackmail. In 1967, Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village opened as a private gay club. Stonewall Inn registered as a private club to deter the New York State Liquor Authority that outlawed homosexuals being served alcohol. It was a near daily occurrence that members of the community would be harassed, beaten, and/or arrested. In the early hours of June 28th, 1969, nearly a month before man stepped foot on the moon, protests broke out. It began at Stonewall Inn and flooded out into the surrounding area and nearby park; Christopher Park that lasted for days. Led by community members like Marsha P. Johnson and Zazu Nova. Johnson, a self-identified drag queen and Nova, a black transgender woman were noted by many witnesses who protested as the police raided Stonewall Inn that iconic morning. This became known as the Stonewall Uprising. This was not a violent protest, but a revolution of justice for a community that was voiceless until June 28th 1969.

Fast forward to 2016, under the Antiquities Code, section 320301 of title 54, United States Code, then President Barack Obama declared Stonewall Inn, Christopher Park, and surrounding areas (7.7 acres) as a National Monument. This declaration took place on June 24, 2016 and is the first of its kind commemorating LGBT history.

Today, the LGBTQIA+ community continues to grow across the globe. For many places around the world, being gay is still outlawed and violence still follows community members. June is more than the start of summer, it is more than the rainbow flags, drag queens with hair reaching towards the sky, and lively parades. PRIDE is about resilience of a community. PRIDE is about fighting for what is right. PRIDE is about equality and inclusion. PRIDE is you and me and the community around us. Most importantly, PRIDE is love persevering. PRIDE isn't about gay people. It isn't about understanding it but respecting everyone. Be kind to one another and know that love is love.



- <https://www.goodrx.com/health-topic/lgbtq/meaning-of-lgbtqia>
- <https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-stonewall-riots-what-really-happened-what-didnt-and-what-became-myth>
- <https://www.nps.gov/ston/index.htm>

Be a Rainbow

Written by Barbara Green
Equal Opportunity Manager
National Park Service
Alaska Regional Office

We are connected through experiencing this global pandemic together. It has been very challenging navigating our way through it and continuously seeking the light at the end of the proverbial tunnel.

When I first went home to telework in March 2020, it would have seemed incomprehensible to consider I would still be teleworking two years later. I will admit to feeling a bit apprehensive about returning to my office in downtown Anchorage this month; it has been awhile since I have been around in-person groups.



Courtesy of Barbara's son, Matthew Green

As an introvert, being cloistered at home was not problematic for me. Oh sure, I can engage with anyone, to the point there are those who are skeptical I am an introvert based on their perception of a stereotypical one. However, I do prefer my solitude and often venture out alone, so I managed teleworking very well.

What I did not manage well was my COVID coping mechanism – consuming copious amounts of chocolate. I confess to frequently ordering deliciously decadent and divine chocolate from Harbor Sweets, based in Salem, Massachusetts, and routinely checking the Fred Meyer bakery for pumpkin chocolate chip cookies. Not the best way to cope based on how tight my once forgiving sweatpants became.

In my attempt to find a better way to cope, I started listening to podcasts and gravitated towards the uplifting, encouraging and inspirational ones. I incorporated a “walk and talk” routine into my daily schedule and listened to podcasts while walking. And I have learned to enjoy one or two pieces of chocolate versus gorging on each morsel in the entire box.

The brutality Asians experienced during the height of the pandemic evoked painful memories of the racism I endured during my youth. My heart felt like it broke into a million pieces and my soul shattered each time I read about the inhumane mistreatment the Asian community was subjected to. Contending with COVID affected me in a myriad of ways and I am not the same person I was back in March 2020; the world changed and I did, too.

Be a Rainbow Continued

Although there were challenging moments, there were also moments of growth. I have always believed we are never too old to learn and I am on a continuous journey of personal growth. I have become more patient and a better listener. And I make a concerted effort to be kind to those who are unkind to me – I choose kindness. Regardless of how someone may treat me, I care more about how I treat others. I choose to live my life with an open heart and to do my utmost best to help those in need.

We are truly connected for those of us fortunate to have survived this shared experience of contending with this pandemic. And I did experience great anxiety when I first entered the building to return to my office after having been away for a little over two years. It will take some time to adjust and adapt to being in an office setting. Until I adjust, I will think about Maya Angelou, who brought so much love and joy to the world by her mere presence when she was alive, and her words of wisdom are an everlasting legacy.



Courtesy of Barbara's daughter, Nicole Ringland

To help ease my anxiety, it is better for me to focus on others than it is to focus on how I feel. Thus, I tuck this quote in my head to keep in my heart: "The thing to do, it seems to me, is to prepare yourself so you can be a rainbow in somebody else's cloud. Somebody who may not look like you. May not call God the same name you call God – if they call God at all. I may not dance your dances or speak your language. But be a blessing to somebody. That's what I think."

Rainbows have multiple meanings for me. I think about my admiration and respect for the LGBTQI+ community for all of the challenges they have overcome and are still facing, and my advocacy for them and alliance with them. I think about the exquisiteness of seeing a rainbow shimmering brightly after a rain shower. I think about the many shades of colors within myself, a composition of my background, my life experiences, the good, the bad, the ugly, along with my ability to overcome what may seem to be insurmountable obstacles, culminating in a beautiful spectrum of colors.

And then I think about Maya Angelou's quote, and in my quest to help others and be a better person, along with choosing kindness, I want to be a rainbow in somebody else's cloud. After all, I truly believe we are here to help one another and that belief was heightened after what we went through the past couple of years.

Happy Pride Month and may we all be a rainbow in somebody else's cloud.

Juneteenth

At the beginning of 1963, Emancipation Proclamation was enacted which declared enslaved people in states or areas of “rebellion against the United States” would be free. It was not until two and a half years later when General Granger of the Union Army announced that the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 freed slaves, he had several additional tasks to complete. He additionally explained that not only were slaves now equal to their former slave masters but any working relationship between the former slaves and former slave master had been dissolved. This relationship instead transitioned from slave master and enslaved to employer and employee.



Stewart's Canal on the historic eastern Maryland landscape where Harriet Tubman emancipated herself and members of her family. (NPS photo)

In honor of the final and complete liberation of slaves that occurred on June 19, 1865, African Americans commemorated this event with regular celebrations that highlighted various cultural references. These celebrations later became known as “Juneteenth.” First was a heavy emphasis on wearing your best attire because, in many instances, slaves were restricted in the ability to wear appropriate attire. Second, there were a range of activities to entertain the masses, many of which continue in tradition today. Rodeos, fishing, barbecuing, and baseball are just a few of the typical Juneteenth activities you may witness today. Juneteenth almost always focused on education and self-improvement.

Juneteenth is the oldest known US celebration of the abolition of the chattel slave system, and the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in Texas. In 1980, Texas became the first state to officially acknowledge Juneteenth as a state holiday. In June 2021, President Joseph R. Biden declared Juneteenth a Day of Observance commemorating America’s painful past and imploring Americans to continue fighting for a land of “real and lasting justice” that so many of us call home.



COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Last month's question:

Does anyone know of similar locations (to San Francisco's Japantown) we could visit?

Community Answers:

If the person's niece is interested in Japanese culture, and on the west coast, she might enjoy the Japanese Gardens in Portland, OR, considered the best or one of the best in the U.S. (<https://japanesegarden.org/>). They feature cultural events such as the tea ceremony. There are other Japanese Gardens in the U.S. that may have similar cultural events.

~Linus Y. Chen, Attorney

Member resources

What we're watching...

- [Everything Everywhere All at Once](#)
 - [Ms. Marvel](#) - Disney Plus
 - [WATCH: Biden approves steps toward an Asian American and Pacific Islander museum](#)
 - [Love Victor](#) - Hulu
 - [The Lincoln Lawyer](#) - Netflix
 - [Pose](#) - Hulu
 - [Hustle](#) - Netflix
-

What we're listening to...

- [Order 9066 Chapter 4: Gaman - Making Do.](#)
Podcast by APM Reports
-

What we're reading...

- [This woman navigated a 3,000-mile Pacific voyage without maps or technology.](#)
- [The fight to save Hawaii Sign Language from extinction](#)
- [The Path Towards Conservation](#) - Jiny Kim
- 50th Anniversary of Title IX - [Patsy Mink, Congress' 1st woman of color, was the lead sponsor.](#)
 - [NPS biography about Patsy Mink's life](#)
- [Make Change: How to Fight Injustice, Dismantle Systemic Oppression, and Own Our Future](#) - By Shaun King

Contact us at fapacboard@ios.doi.gov to join our email list and get the latest news!

MEMBERSHIP

FAPAC has been a reputable organization since 1985 because of its members' contributions. Your dues support FAPAC programming and a portion of it goes directly to our FAPAC-DOI chapter. Sign up at fapac.org/Membership