

OPM NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 27, 1996

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EDUCATION LEVEL AMONG ASIANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS HAS STRONG CORRELATION TO GREATER RESPONSIBILITY AND MORE PAY

Washington, D.C. -- A college degree is more than just words on parchment. A recently released profile of federal employees of Asian or Pacific Islander origins demonstrates that education has been their vehicle to greater professional opportunity. And with that opportunity to serve the American public, so too has come improved compensation reflecting the community's increased employment in professional, administrative and technical occupations.

As of September 30, 1995, the federal government employed 82,961 federal employees of Asian/Pacific Islander descent. Of those individuals working in permanent positions, 33.8 percent were employed in professional occupations, 19.9 percent worked in administrative jobs and 16.1 percent held technical positions.

These and other highlights are reviewed in the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's report entitled "Asian/Pacific Islanders in the Federal Government: A Statistical Profile." The statistics represent a snapshot of full- and part-time permanent employment in the Executive Branch on September 30, 1995.

In terms of advanced education, Asians/Pacific Islanders have, as a group, the largest percentage of college graduates in the federal workforce. For example, the OPM report notes that 51 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders in the federal workforce had a bachelor's or higher-level degree, compared to 39 percent for the average federal employee. This level of achievement helped the community earn a white-collar, average pay grade that is only one-tenth of 1 percent lower (GS-9.2) than that for the entire federal workforce (GS-9.3), despite averaging more than two years less service. The slight difference in grade levels is expected to be closed as the Asian/Pacific Islander community gains seniority in the workplace.

"Each person's repertoire of offerings to prospective employers should include 'education' prominently in the mix," said OPM Director Jim King. "This report documents the progress of Asians and Pacific Islanders in government and confirms the value of education, both in

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employment opportunities and in achieving later success, even during this era of government

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downsizing.”

Confirming the value of education in today’s job market, the report notes that Asians/Pacific Islanders accounted for 5.7 percent of all new hires to permanent federal positions, a percentage that exceeded their overall federal presence of 3.9 percent. The new-hire percentage also indicates the government is making progress at bringing in a higher number of qualified members of the community into its workforce. In the civilian labor force, Asians/Pacific Islanders held 3.3 percent of jobs.

Men and women of Asian or Pacific Islander decent have ancestral ties to the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent or the Pacific Islands.

Other profile findings:

- o 66 percent of Asians/Pacific Islanders were employed at or above the GS-9 grade level,
the highest concentration at that level for any minority group;
- o Asian/Pacific Islanders in the federal workforce exceeded their civilian labor force representation (3.3 percent) in seven of the top-15 growth occupations, which include
medical doctors and computer specialists;
- o 70 percent of Asians/Pacific Islanders held permanent positions in professional, administrative or technical jobs at the GS or senior levels;
- o Among the most populous federal occupations, Asians/Pacific Islanders were best represented in job series for doctors (17 percent), engineers (12 percent) and nurses (8 percent); and,
- o The Departments of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, Veterans Affairs, and Treasury employed 56 percent of the Executive Branch workforce, but 69 percent of men and women of Asian/Pacific Islander decent.

Media may obtain copies of the report by calling Mike Orenstein at OPM on 202-606-1800.

Copies of the report also are available by accessing “Mainstreet,” OPM’s electronic bulletin board. Callers using a computer and modem should dial 202-606-4800. Once connected, the report can be found in the Workforce Diversity file area.

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