



**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE  
STATE OF OREGON, FOR THE COUNTY OF BENTON**

**In the Matter of Proclaiming May as )  
Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, )  
and Pacific Islanders Heritage Month )  
in Benton County )**

**PROCLAMATION #P2024-010**

The month of May brings a national celebration of Asian American, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage. May was chosen to honor two specific dates: May 7, 1843, when the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States, and May 10, 1869, the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad, which was laid primarily by Chinese immigrants.

The Asian and Pacific Islands span 48 different countries and cover a wide variety of people, cultures, languages, religions, and experiences. Benton County has been home to many Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. In the early 1800s, Native Hawaiians came to what is now Oregon to participate in the fur trade. In 1880, Chinese immigrants established a small Corvallis Chinatown within the Avery-Helm Historic District that was unfortunately lost in a fire in the 1920s. Today, we have over 50 individual cultural groups from throughout the Asian, Hawaiian, and Pacific Islands living in Oregon. We celebrate centuries of cultural connections between Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. We also celebrate visitors from other countries who are studying, working, and living in our communities.

Acknowledging the heritage of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders includes acknowledging our history of discrimination and exclusion. The Oregon Constitution forbade Chinese refugees and immigrants from settling in Oregon. In the 1880s, many Chinese people in Oregon were expelled from various cities where many moved together to Portland. In 1886, Oregon hosted an anti-Chinese convention in Portland. National and state laws continued to push dislike of foreigners that harmed our Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities. We acknowledge the exclusionary practices and laws within Oregon that have historically harmed Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders; and we will continue our work toward making our communities safe and welcoming for all. We show solidarity and support for all Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders not just during May, but every day.

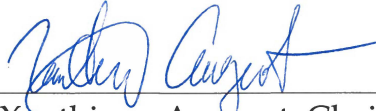
2024 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander month. This year's theme is "Bridging Histories, Shaping Our Future." The 2024 theme is an homage to our ancestors and invites all Americans to delve into the legacies, triumphs, and challenges that have shaped Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities. It embodies the

spirit of our collective journey – one rooted in resilience and hope – and encourages us to forge intergenerational connections to honor our past and pave a durable path forward.

THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED that May is Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in Benton County, and all community members are encouraged to join in this observance.

Adopted this 21<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2024.  
Signed this 21<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2024.

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS



Xanthippe Augerot, Chair



Nancy Wyse, Vice Chair



Pat Malone, Commissioner