



From Your National Officers

Nov. 7, 2016

A lot of conversation during this short work week will no doubt be about our elections. I hope you'll exercise your responsibility for casting your votes. I'd like to remind our members that FAA policy ([via HRPM LWS 8.8](#)) provides for an excused absence in certain circumstances, with supervisor approval. While we honor this hallmark of democracy by our participation in it, please remember that in this same week, we have an opportunity to also honor our Veterans who have sacrificed to protect our ability to choose our leaders and to provide a voice on referendums and other policies and financial measures that impact our lives.

There are anecdotal accounts that people of Asian heritage served during the Revolutionary War and there are records of AAPIs fighting in every major U.S. conflict since the War of 1812. The Vets who served through World War II and before were certainly few and far between, but some of these pioneering Veterans of Asian heritage gave their last full measure of devotion even while the U.S. government didn't always provide the same rights and protections for them as they did for other Americans. Their experiences are now part of our proud AAPI heritage, including:

- The **442nd "Go for Broke" Regimental Combat Team**, comprised almost entirely of Japanese Americans whose families suffered indignities of being confined in U.S. internment camps while the younger generation dodged bullets in Europe to become the most decorated unit in the history of American warfare.
- Forty percent of the Filipinos who lived in California attempted to enlist into the U.S. Army. Members of the **1st and 2nd Filipino Infantry Regiments** served with distinction in New Guinea and the Philippines campaigns as part of a segregated battalion. They endured discrimination while training in California because some of them were mistaken for Japanese Americans when off base.
- **Hazel Ying Lee**, the first Chinese-American woman to fly for the U.S. military, who died in a mid-air collision while ferrying planes for the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASP. The cemetery initially refused to bury her and her brother Victor (who was killed in combat in France around the same time) in the family's chosen location because it was "in the White section." WASP was not granted Veteran status until 1977. (Read about Lee in a [FocusFAA feature written by Patti Wilson](#), NAPA member and president of the Professional Women Controllers)

There are many more group and individual stories like these. Our pioneering Veterans paved the way for other AAPIs who served and continue to serve, including our active, reserve, and former military members who are part of NAPA. Thank you for your service. (For our D.C.-based employees, the FAA has planned [a week of events for Veterans.](#))

So this week, honor our Veterans by exercising your democratic rights and vote. And especially on Friday, Nov. 11, take pause and remember the sacrifices of our Veterans past and present.

In service to our organization,
Anthony Chu
President
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