



NOTABLE MINORITIES WHO CHANGED HISTORY

May 2, 2008

Featuring Patsy Takemoto Mink

“We have to build things that we want to see accomplished, in life and in our country, based on our own personal experiences ... to make sure that others ... do not have to suffer the same discrimination.”

- A Patsy Takemoto Mink Quote

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is celebrated in May to commemorate the contributions of people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent in the United States. Congress passed a joint Congressional Resolution in 1978 to commemorate Asian American Heritage Week during the first week of May. May was chosen due to some important anniversaries this month. For example, the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants in America on May 7, 1843 and the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. Congress later voted to expand the celebration from one week to a month long festival.

May Dates to Remember:

- 1 - National Day of Prayer (United States)
- 1 - Ascension Day (Christian)
- 2 - Holocaust Remembrance Day
- 5 - Cinco De Mayo (Mexico, United States)
- 11 - Mother's Day
- 11 - Whitt Sunday
- 12 - Native American Rights Day (United States)
- 17 - Armed Forces Day (United States)
- 23 - Declaration of the Bab Day
- 24 - International Jazz Day
- 24 - Victoria Day (Canada)
- 26 - Memorial Day (Observed)
- 30 - Memorial Day (Actual)

Office of Access & Diversity

Christa Martin
Assistant to the President
for Access & Diversity

Phone: 931.540.2644

TDD Relay Number
(for the hearing impaired) : 1-800-848-0298

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Patsy Takemoto Mink

Patsy Matsu Takemoto Mink (1927 - 2002) **Asian Pacific American Politician**

Patsy Matsu Takemoto Mink was born on December 6, 1927, on the island of Maui in Hawaii. She graduated high school in 1944 as class valedictorian and moved to Honolulu to attend the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She then transferred to the University of Nebraska. At the University of Nebraska, Mink faced a racial segregation policy that stated that students of color had to live in separate dormitories from the whites. Mink organized a coalition within the community and ended the university's segregation policies. She then returned to Honolulu to prepare for med school, but no med school accepted women at the time. She decided that the best way to exact change was to attend law school. She attended the University of Chicago Law School, and while there, met her husband John Mink, a hydrologist. She obtained her juris doctor in 1951.

The couple settled in Honolulu and Patsy became the first woman in Hawaii to practice law there. In 1952, the couple welcomed their daughter, Gwendolyn, who later became an author and educator on labor and women's issues. In 1959, Hawaii became the 50th state of the Union and in 1965, Patsy Mink became the first female minority to be elected to Congress from Hawaii. She served six consecutive terms. During the 1972 Presidential race, she ran in the Oregon primary as an anti-war candidate.

During her time in Congress, she created a coalition to support the Title IX Amendment of the Higher Education Act that she had written. The Higher Education act prohibits gender discrimination by federally funded institutions. She also introduced the first comprehensive Early Childhood Education Act and authored the Women's Educational Equality Act. These laws that were written by Mink were declared landmark laws by Congress and the Title IX Amendment of the Higher Education Act was renamed by President George W. Bush on October 29, 2002 as the Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act.

In 1977, Patsy Mink had given up her seat in Congress to run for a vacancy in the U. S. Senate. She lost the primary, but President Jimmy Carter appointed her to his cabinet as Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. After her service in the Carter Administration, she settled in Honolulu, where she was elected to the City Council. Her peers in the council elected her Chairwoman. In August of 2002, she was hospitalized with complications from the chickenpox. She worsened and on September 28, 2002, died in Honolulu of viral pneumonia at age 74. She is buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. She passed away one week after the 2002 primary election, too late for her name to be removed from the ballot. On November 5, 2002, she was posthumously re-elected to Congress.

Source: (www.wikipedia.com)

Did you know?

Monday, May 5, is Cinco De Mayo. It is a regional holiday in Mexico. It is primarily celebrated in the state of Puebla. It is not an obligatory federal holiday. It commemorates an initial victory of Mexican Forces over French forces in the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862. The date is observed in the United States and other locations around the world as a celebration of Mexican Heritage and Pride.