

## **District, City Introduce Jewish American and Asian Pacific American Heritage Banners**

As you visit our schools this month, you may see two beautiful new banners honoring Jewish American Heritage Month and Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. The banners are a joint project of the City of Alameda and two of AUSD's Equity Round Tables.

The Jewish American Heritage Month banner was developed by the Jewish Education Round Table, which was formed earlier this year. The banner features Elie Wiesel, Alexandra ("Aly") Rose Raisman, Albert Einstein, Bella Abzug, Levi Strauss, Rashida Leah Jones, Steven Spielberg, and Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

The Asian Pacific American Heritage Month banner was developed by the Asian Pacific American Round Table and features Dwayne Johnson, Mindy Kaling, Chloe Kim, Fred Korematsu, Patsy Mink, Lea Salonga, Eugene HUU-Chau "Gene" Trinh, and Gene Luen Yang.

Biographies for the people featured on both banners can be found on the following pages. "I'm grateful to the City of Alameda and our round tables for working on these banners," says Superintendent Sean McPhetridge. "It is so important to highlight the contributions and leadership of our Jewish and Asian Pacific American brothers and sisters, not only to provide role models to our students but also to raise the awareness of all of our community members."

The banners will remain up at our sites until the end of May.



### **Eliezer "Elie" Wiesel**

Born in Romania, Elie Wiesel was a writer, professor, political activist, Nobel Peace Prize recipient, and Holocaust survivor. He authored dozens of books including *Night*, which is read in Alameda schools and is based on his experiences in concentration camps. Wiesel helped establish the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. and was a strong defender of human rights during his lifetime.

### **Alexandra ("Aly") Rose Raisman**

Raisman is an American gymnast and two-time Olympian. She was a member and captain of both the 2012 and 2016 U.S. Women's Olympic Gymnastics teams, which won team gold. In 2016 Raisman also won the individual all-around silver medal and floor silver medal. In 2012 Raisman was the most decorated American gymnast with gold medals in the team and floor competitions as well as a bronze medal on the balance beam.

### **Albert Einstein**

Born in Germany, Einstein was a theoretical physicist who developed the theory of relativity. He is famous for his mass-energy equivalence, commonly referred to as  $E=MC$  squared and also known as the "world's most famous equation." Einstein received the 1921 Nobel Prize in Physics. He settled in the United States after Hitler came to power in 1933 and became an American citizen in 1940.

### **Bella Savitzky Abzug**

Bella Abzug, also referred to by her nickname "Battling Bella," was a lawyer, U.S. Representative, social activist, and leader of the Women's Movement. In 1970, her first campaign slogan was, "This woman's place is in the House – the House of Representatives." She co-founded the National Women's Political Caucus in 1971. She went on to lead the National Advisory Commission for Women.

### **Levi Strauss**

At 18, Levi Strauss traveled to the United States to join his brothers who had a wholesale dry goods business in New York City. As a businessman, in 1853 Strauss went on to found the first company to manufacture blue jeans, Levi Strauss & Co., in San Francisco.

### **Rashida Leah Jones**

Rashida Jones is an American actress, producer, singer, and writer. She is well known for playing Ann Perkins on the comedy series *Parks and Recreation*. She also appeared as Karen Filippelli on the comedy series *The Office*, was also on the drama series *Boston Public*, and has appeared in a number of films. Currently, she stars as the lead title role in the comedy series *Angie Tribeca*. Rashida Jones attended Harvard and gave the commencement speech there in 2016.

### **Steven Allan Spielberg**

Steven Spielberg has been a filmmaker for more than 40 years and is the highest-grossing director in history. Spielberg co-founded DreamWorks Studios. He won the Academy Award for Best Director for *Schindler's List* and *Saving Private Ryan*, and was nominated five other times. Three films, *Jaws*, *E.T.*, and *Jurassic Park*, broke box office records

### **Ruth Bader Ginsburg**

Born Joan Ruth Bader to Russian Jewish immigrants in New York and often referred to as "RBG," Ruth Bader Ginsburg is an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Upon her appointment on August 10, 1993, she became only the second female justice to be confirmed. Ginsburg earned her bachelor's degree at Cornell and studied law at Harvard before transferring to Columbia where she graduated first in her class.



### **Dwayne Johnson**

A Samoan and African American film actor and former professional wrestler, Johnson was born in Hayward, California in 1972. He is famous for his roles in movies including *Moana*, *Jumanji*, and the *Fast and Furious* series. He was second-highest paid actor in Hollywood in 2017.

### **Mindy Kaling**

This Indian American actor, writer, producer, and director is currently producing and starring in *The Mindy Project*. She is also known for her work on *The Office* as a producer, writer, and actor and as the voice for Sadness in *Inside Out*. She has written two memoirs. Her most recent *Why not Me?* came out as #1 on the *New York Times*' best seller list. In 2012, Mindy was named one of *Time Magazine's* 100 most influential people in the world.

### **Chloe Kim**

A Korean American gold medalist in the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Snowboard Halfpipe contest, Kim, at 17, became the first female snowboarder to land back-to-back 1080s (three spins in the air followed by another three spins on the opposite side). This California native is also the only athlete in X Games history to earn three gold medals before the age of 16.

### **Fred Korematsu**

This Japanese American civil rights activist objected to the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. He was born in Oakland and attended Castlemont High School in that city. In 1942, at the age of 23, he refused to go to the government's internment camps. He appealed his case all the way to the Supreme Court, which ruled against him in 1944. His case was reopened and his conviction cleared in 1983. Fred received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1997. In 2010, California passed the Fred Korematsu Day bill, making January 30 the first day in the US named after an Asian American.

### **Patsy Mink**

Born in Hawaii in 1927, Mink was the first Japanese American woman to practice law in Hawaii and the first woman of color elected to Congress. She began her political career serving on the Hawaii senate in 1956. Without support from the Democratic Party leadership, she ran a grass roots campaign in 1964 and was elected to the U.S. House. She served for 12 years. She was elected

again from 1990 until her death in 2002. She is recognized as a key figure in passing the Title IX legislation that brought academic and athletic equity to American educational institutions.

### **Lea Salonga**

This Filipino American actress and singer is best known for her performance as Eponine in *Les Miserables* on Broadway and as Mulan and Jasmine in the Disney movies *Mulan* and *Aladdin*. Salonga won a Tony for Best Actress in a Musical for her starring role in *Ms. Saigon* on Broadway in 1991.

### **Eugene Huu-Chau "Gene" Trinh** –

After earning a Ph.D. in applied physics at Yale, Trinh began his career as a senior research scientist at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at NASA. In 1992, he became the first Vietnamese American astronaut in space when he flew aboard NASA Space Shuttle mission STS-50 in 1992. As an astronaut, he spent 13 days, 19 hours, and 30 minutes in space.

### **Gene Luen Yang**

The Chinese American comic book writer of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *American Born Chinese*, and *Boxers and Saints*. Born in the Bay Area, his career began when he self-published his own comics while he taught high school computer science in Oakland. Gene earned a MacArthur Genius award in 2016 for “confirming comics’ place as an important creative and imaginative force within literature, art and education.” In 2016 he appointed as National Ambassador to Young People's Literature.