

Chronological: Informal Briefing at the Smithsonian Institution, 1999-05-22

Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers
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MAY 22, 1999

— ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC INSTITUTE AT —
THE SMITHSONIAN, BRIEFING

Provost O'Connor, Dr. Odo, Distinguished

Guests and Friends:

**For a century and a half, the
Smithsonian Institution has been a place
of wonder.**

The Smithsonian receives more than 29 million visitors annually and is a place where Americans are reminded of how much our nation has in common.

**It is the principal repository of our
nation's collective memory and the
nation's largest public cultural space.**

**The Smithsonian is dedicated to
preserving, understanding and displaying
collections that portray the diversity and
depth of American civilization.**

Through its 140 million artifacts, 16 museums and galleries, and the National Zoo, the Smithsonian safeguards our collective history and symbolizes the ideals to which we aspire as a polity.

Three years ago, I was asked to serve on the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American National Advisory Group. Over the course of two years, the Group deliberated on the Smithsonian's regard for the rich diversity of our Asian Pacific communities.

Our research revealed that a record of the historical and contemporary significance of our presence in the United States is largely absent from the Smithsonian's collections, research, exhibitions, and current planning.

The establishment of the Asian Pacific American Studies Program in 1998 under the Office of Provost O'Connor was an important step toward addressing these gaps.

**The Program will facilitate the
incorporation of Asian Pacific heritages
into our national cultural legacy through
collections, research, exhibitions,
educational outreach, and technology
networking.**

The program will provide a better understanding of our rich heritages through the creation of future Asian Pacific American exhibitions and other activities at the Smithsonian,

**and help to dispel any Asian Pacific
American stereotypes and prejudices.**

**It gives me great pleasure to introduce
to you Dr. Franklin Odo. Among his
many accomplishments,**

**Dr. Odo was former Chairperson and
Professor of the Ethnic Studies
Department of the University of Hawaii,
and currently is Counselor to Provost
O'Connor.**

**He is the champion and leader of the
Asian Pacific American Program at the
Smithsonian. Please welcome Dr. Odo.**

REMARKS BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE
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