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**Los Angeles Public Library Celebrates Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage
Month with Free Day-Long Festival**
Central Library Hosts AAPI Joy on May 18 in Downtown Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES (May 14, 2024)—The Los Angeles Public Library will celebrate Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month at Central Library with a free day-long festival on Saturday, May 18, entitled AAPI Joy: Wellness, Healing, Resilience and Resistance. An outdoor hula performance and ribbon cutting will kick off the event in front of the library's Flower Street entrance, beginning at 11:00 a.m. at 630 W. Fifth Street, Los Angeles.

Speakers will include City Librarian John F. Szabo; Valerie Lynne Shaw, President of the Board of Library Commissioners; and Candice Mack, co-lead of the AAPI Festival Committee.

AAPI Joy celebrates the diversity of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities in Los Angeles. Numerous performances, workshops, crafts and presentations will explore the City's vibrant AAPI heritage. Highlights include Cambodian and Korean dance performances, Japanese taiko drumming, lei making for teens, and well known podcasters Soogia and Ed talking about what it is to be an Asian American.

"Los Angeles Public Library is committed to celebrating the cultural heritage of Angelenos from all backgrounds," said City Librarian Szabo. "Our newest festival, AAPI Joy: Wellness, Healing, Resilience and Resistance, pays homage not only to the rich cultural traditions of the city's diverse Asian and Pacific Islander communities, but also addresses ongoing struggles to achieve equity."

In addition to engaging performances and demonstrations, more serious topics at the festival will include a conversation about the book *I Am Oum Ry: A Champion Kickboxer Story of Surviving the Cambodian Genocide and Discovering Peace*; a workshop by the AMBIV Collective, which seeks to empower disability and

neurodivergent communities to live a meaningful and fulfilling life; and a presentation by author Paula Yoo about her latest YA nonfiction book, *Rising from the Ashes: Los Angeles, 1992. Edward Jae Song Lee, Latasha Harlins, Rodney King, and a City on Fire*.

“As a hub of our L.A. community, the Library welcomes everyone,” said Commissioner Shaw. “Cultural festivals like AAPJ Joy, as well as events celebrating other heritage months throughout the year, provide us with the opportunity to engage a broad cross section of Angelenos in our city’s many rich traditions.”

For more information about AAPJ Joy: Wellness, Healing, Resilience and Resistance, visit the Los Angeles Public Library website at lapl.org/aapi-joy.

A recipient of the nation’s highest honor for library service—the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest and most diverse urban population of any library in the nation. Its Central Library, 72 branch libraries, collection of more than eight million books, state-of-the-art technology accessible at lapl.org and thousands of public programs provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for lifelong learning.

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